

# Ministry

International Journal for Clergy

December 1993

Year of the Pastor  
Special Issue

**Keep  
watch**

*over yourselves and  
all the flock  
of which the Holy spirit  
has made you  
overseers.*

**Be  
shepherds**  
*of the church of  
God,  
which he bought with  
his own blood.*



Acts 20:28 NIV

## Lessons from Waco

Caleb Rosado in his analysis of the Waco tragedy (July and August 1993) states: "The church does not have two authorities, but one—the Bible. The writings of Ellen G. White exist to guide us to the Bible, not to take its place." The second assertion is true, but the first needs to be informed by the Dallas statement of fundamental beliefs, which says that "her writings are a continuing and *authoritative* source of truth."

Hopefully, the writings of *all* Adventist authors should "exist to guide us to the Bible, not to take its place," but not all authors can speak with the authority of one who says "I was shown." Any attempt to exalt the more ancient testimony of Jesus by slighting the more recent will prove as counterproductive to the Seventh-day Adventist Church as it did to the Jews in the first century.

One other point. Perhaps the abundance of Adventist offshoots is a sign of a vital church. Only a living branch produces new shoots. Only a lively faith worth wrangling over and purifying produces fanaticism. I would like to see an article on what we can learn from such fanatical movements and independent ministries. What are we neglecting that they have to offer?—Tim Crosby, Newbury Park, California.

## Adventists and Evangelicals

Michelle Rader's concern that we understand and interpret correctly Evangelical teaching as it relates to cheap grace is well taken ("Adventists and Evangelicals: Another Viewpoint," June 1993). Ms. Rader cites the response of Adventist youth to the Valuegenesis study as evidence the Adventist Church is not clear on justification by faith.

Salvation by works is apparently indigenous to the human heart. Steven Ozment, in his book *Protestants: The Birth of a Revolution*, observes, "Martin Luther of all people acknowledged his inability, after two decades of effort, to overcome the fantasy that he could save himself by his own works." Said Luther, "I myself have now been preaching and cultivating [justification by faith alone] for almost

20 years and still I feel the old clinging dirt of wanting to deal so with God that I may contribute something and He will have to give me His grace in exchange for my holiness."

Legalism is not peculiar to individual Seventh-day Adventists. It is a human attribute found among members of all churches regardless of their accepted theology and can be eradicated only by the sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit.—Alva Randall, Columbia, Maryland.

■ Michelle Rader misunderstands the fundamental difference between the historic Adventist and Evangelical theologies of salvation.

Rader understands C. Raymond Holmes as saying that "Evangelicals require of Adventists to abandon their insistence on sanctification." But this isn't at all how Holmes represents the Evangelical view. His article refers to Kenneth Samples' characterization of the Evangelical strain within Adventism as including "the belief that righteousness by faith consists of justification, *with sanctification being the fruit*" (February 1993, p. 22). Holmes does not, therefore, state that Evangelicals—whether in or out of Adventism—do not believe in sanctification. That is not the issue.

Rader says that "many Evangelicals do preach Christ and the importance of holy living." I suspect we would be hard pressed to find professing Christians of any theological stripe who would deny the importance and value of holiness. Except for the raw hedonist, most intelligent people on the planet—whether religious or otherwise—believe that a certain amount of moral rectitude is necessary. The dispute between historic Adventism and Evangelicalism is over whether *complete* holiness is possible in this life, as distinct from partial holiness. The question is whether Christianity offers the prospect of a higher earthly attainment, or whether it must be content with offering yet another recipe, among countless others, for doing one's frail best.—Kevin D. Paulson, Redlands, California.

■ Michelle Rader writes that "there are many Adventists still confused over the basis of their salvation." It appears that she may be among that large group herself. She approvingly quotes *The Evangelical Dictionary of Theology* when it uses the expression "counted righteous on the ground of faith" and later in her own words says: "there have been individuals in the Adventist Church . . . who clearly understood the faith basis of salvation."

While much evangelicalism would agree with that view, the Bible and the Protestant reformers could not. True evangelicalism stands on the truth that obedience is the basis of salvation. "Not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified" (Rom. 2:13). Perfect obedience has always been the ground for acceptance with God. The only means by which we can render it is through faith in Jesus Christ who has lived a perfect human life. Faith's value is as a means of salvation, not as its basis. Paul dealt with the *basis* of salvation in Romans and with its *means* in Galatians. Adventism has generally been weak in both books.

We can certainly agree with Michelle's conclusion that "we should encourage each other in looking to Christ alone for salvation . . ." When perfect obedience is its basis, there is no hope anywhere else.—Richard Marin, Fallbrook, California.

## Sabbath observance

Martin Weber's editorial of February 1993 reminds me of a frequent practice of our denomination. It concerns hiring salaried crews to operate halls that we rent on Sabbaths. (If the crews were Seventh-day Adventists who would do the job as part of holy service without expecting monetary gain, it would be different.) I seriously question this practice, and explanations to justify it fail to convince me.

I cannot help feeling that we as a church commit a corporate sin, in this matter. I would like some clear counsel from the Bible or Spirit of Prophecy on this.—Simo Perho, Joensuu, Finland.

In this special issue dedicated to the Year of the Pastor, how appropriate to hear from our beloved patriarch Charles E. Bradford. The veteran administrator and pastor, now retired, shares his testimony of what his own pastors have meant to him.

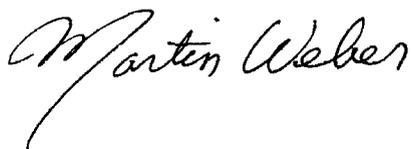
**How are you getting along** with your spouse? Are there some other issues in your life difficult to deal with? Would you like anonymous counseling from qualified professionals at no cost to you for any emotional need in your family? Then read about the Ministry Care Line on page 20.

**Pastors everywhere** will shout Amen! while reading what Walter Douglas has to say about "Local pastors: the voice of the ministry." Wise church leaders will consider his counsel.

**What's so special** about Rob Vandeman, Fred Hughes, Ron Cook, and Mike Stevenson, Jr.? Let Fern Gibson Babcock tell you as she shares what church school teachers and their students like about their pastors. Her article is both heart-warming and eye-opening.

**One step forward** and two steps back. Does that describe your success at increasing membership? Then let Miguel Angel Cerna explain how to "Win them and hold them."

**Are you too nice** to the wolves that ravish your flock? Do you know how to fight the battles of the Lord? Fasten your seatbelt and read "Holy oil and fiery swords."



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# Wages versus gift

John M. Fowler

**F**or the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 6:23).\*

Paul's famous statement contains two flaws, yet it states beautifully the core of salvation—and therein lies both the mystery and the majesty of the Christian gospel.

**First, a grammatical flaw.** Had I written such a sentence for my high school composition class, my English teacher would have taken me to task for committing a grammatical gaffe, which in her unrelenting commitment to the queen's English would have been as unforgivable as saying that Shakespeare learned his drama in Calcutta. The grammatical error is a lack of parallelism, which if strictly followed would have the statement read: "The wages of sin is death, but the wages of righteousness is life."

Such a statement would be grammatically correct. Sin has its own payment. No one commits sin without drawing the resultant consequence. No one can be a servant to sin and expect not to receive its wages. And sin is a faithful paymaster, with its ultimate wage of death: "The soul that sins shall die" (Eze. 18:4). Sinners get what they deserve. At the end of the road, they meet their paymaster, and receive what they have earned, like in a contract. One might define that contract as cause-effect: it's natural enough to reap what one sows. Or one might even call it an essential part of a social or a moral contract: judgment call is a necessary consequence to social or moral infractions. Wages of sin is thus what one earns, merits, ultimately gets. As Robert L. Stevenson

once remarked: "Sooner or later we all sit down to a banquet of consequences."

If the consequence of sin is death, does it not follow that the wages of righteousness is life? Grammar, particularly parallelism, might expect such a conclusion, but the apostle Paul is not writing the grammar of language. He, under inspiration of the Holy Spirit, is setting down the grammar of the gospel of Jesus Christ. According to that gospel, death is the natural "wages paid by sin;"<sup>1</sup> we achieve it; we deserve it; we cannot escape it. But eternal life is not the natural payment of our righteousness, for by nature we can never be righteous. So Paul's grammar of eternal life says that we can't achieve eternal life; we can't work for forgiveness; we can't earn freedom from sin. But we can receive eternal life; it is given to us as a gift.

**Second, a logical flaw.** If sin brings death, the opposite of sin must bring the opposite of death. If I earn death because of my sin, I should be able to earn the opposite of death by doing the opposite of sin. Such statements are quite logical. Indeed, whole philosophic and religious systems are built on the foundation that redemption from human depravity can be found within the human. For one thing, ancient religions have taught the innate capacity of the human soul to free itself from sin or to defy the finality of death. For example, the Hindu "holds that the goal of spiritual perfection is the crown of a long patient effort. Man grows by countless lives into his divine self-existence. Every life, every act, is a step which we may take either backward or forward. By one's thought, will, and action, one determines what one is yet to be."<sup>2</sup>

For another, secular humanism has affirmed the adequacy of self to be its

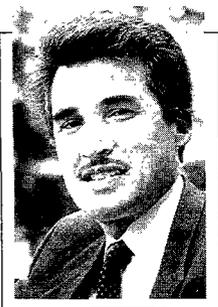
own savior and its own destiny. Either way, the assertion is clear: if death is the wages of sin, life is the wages of righteousness. Therefore, the primary human quest must remain, philosophically speaking, in the will to do and the will to be.

But Paul is not concerned with philosophy or logic. He is stating a fundamental truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ: We sin; therefore, we die; but we cannot do good to receive eternal life. Sinners have no innate capacity to free themselves from the consequences of sin. With tongue in cheek, Agnes Rogers Allen described the human predicament in matters a lot less trivial:

*I should be better, brighter, thinner,  
And more intelligent at dinner,  
I should reform and take some pains,  
Improve my person, use my brains,  
There's lots that I could do about it,  
But will I? . . . Honestly I doubt it.<sup>3</sup>*

But in the issue of salvation, the question is not will I or can I. The issue is the reality of sin and the nature of the sinner. According to the Bible, sin is not basically a lapse in conduct, but a rupture in relationship with the Creator, a rebellion against Him, and a refusal to be subject to Him (Rom. 8:7). Since rebellion against God involves more than an individualistic mode of existence, and takes in the cosmic issues of His love, justice, and holiness, any human attempt to restore that rupture on the basis of human will and power is repugnant to the sovereignty of God. Being dead through trespasses and sins (Eph. 2:1, 5; Col. 2:13), and deserving "to die" (Rom. 1:32), the sinner lives in a state of alienation and hopelessness. The way out of the problem of sin, as the Bible sees,

*(Concluded on page 29)*



# Demons of righteousness

Martin Weber

**S**ome of the devil's most devoted disciples are among the best-behaved people on earth. The most deceived of them experience victory

over sin.

You've seen the beaming faces of young Moonies testifying how they used to be slaves of drugs and sex before the "divine principles" of "Reverend" Moon sanctified them. New Agers glowingly report that their Eastern style of meditation brings Christ-consciousness, empowering them to stop smoking and become vegetarians. We know that the occult power channeled in New Age meditation chambers is not the Holy Spirit. But New Agers and Moonies, rejoicing in victory over sin, don't know that their spiritual state is worse than before they became overcomers.

Well, why would the devil bestow victory over sin? Before addressing that, let's affirm that genuine victory over sin is a basic fruit of the gospel. God has plenty of power that He intends for us to claim. But so does Satan! Our crafty foe wants to seize our souls through his deceptions. Thus for all that God offers, the devil has a counterfeit—even a counterfeit victory over sin—to lure us away from the cross so we trust in our own character attainments and thus forfeit salvation (see Gal. 5:4).

The devil knows that all true believers yearn for total victory over sin. As we reach out for Jesus to pull us out of one gutter, Satan tries to snatch our hand and drag us into another. Bad as it is to be snared in the slime of sinful indulgence, the ultimate deception is the opposite ditch off the gospel freeway. Legalism, because it is not of faith, is sin (see Rom. 14:23).

Remember the Pharisees. They had conquered the flesh and its lusts to the point that they even fasted twice a week. But Jesus said these trophies of self-discipline and the disciples of their zealous evangelism were actually sons of hell (see Matt. 23:15).

"Lord, I thank Thee for what Thou art doing in my life," prayed the Pharisee in the sanctuary as he scorned the struggling soul who cast himself upon God's mercy. That model of self-mastery knew not that his own soul was in bondage to demons—*not demons of self-indulgence but demons of self-righteousness!*

Demons of righteousness? Yes! The Bible warns of spiritual zealots who preach Christ—but not Christ as our *only* hope. They preach a gospel, but one of merit instead of mercy (see 2 Cor. 11:2-4). "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness" (verses 13-15).\*

## White magic

Satan's wolf-in-sheep's-clothing strategy multiplies his power to deceive. Take witchcraft, for example. According to the *Encyclopedia Americana*, "magic to cause harm is often called *black* magic or sorcery, and magic intended to help or cure is frequently termed *white* magic."<sup>1</sup> I lament the racial overtones of these terms, but do you see the deception? For anyone eager to indulge in evil, the devil offers black magic. And for those who admire the miracles of blessing that Jesus performed, Satan has white magic. Black magic or white magic

he doesn't care whether people do evil or do good *as long as he is in control.*

In Christ's day, Herod by the demons of iniquity killed John the Baptist for the sake of lust, while the Pharisees by demons of righteousness killed Jesus for the sake of law. In succeeding centuries the emperors of Rome were playboys in their palaces, as the bishops of Rome venerated monastics in the desert and promoted perfectionism (with purgatory as a fire escape for those not quite worthy of heaven). This two-pronged assault from opposite extremes continues today. In Adventist churches, demons of iniquity champion a cheap gospel that compromises lifestyle and doctrine, while demons of righteousness promote obedience and victory apart from gratitude and assurance in Jesus.

Christ is the way, the truth, and the life. Any belief or lifestyle standard that denies this is a doctrine of devils. In earth's final crisis, demons of righteousness will attack Sabbath rest in the name of divine law. Ultimate, universal legalism! But last generation Adventists need not succumb to a Sunday law to be controlled by demons of righteousness.

Recently I interviewed a member who explained how Satan had given him victory over sin. Through reading various independent publications he became obsessed with acquiring a sinless character worthy of heaven. As he prayed, he received a power that brought victory over every sin on his checklist. Meanwhile, a hard-hearted, critical spirit displaced his love, joy, and peace. Then an inner voice told him to join an independent group. He became deeply involved with them, but eventually their mind-control methods opened his eyes. Having come to his senses, he fled to  
*(Concluded on page 29)*

# Me and my pastor

Charles E. Bradford

**A veteran church leader shares recollections, convictions, and counsel.**



*Charles E. Bradford, retired from pastoral and church administrative service, lives in Spring Hill, Florida.*

**S**ome have accused me, on occasion, of overemphasizing pastoral ministry and possibly downplaying other kinds of church work.<sup>1</sup> It is a serious charge. I plead guilty—with explanation.

Perhaps it is time for me to indulge in some self-analysis. Why this partiality, this bias of mine, toward pastors?

Come with me back to my childhood. I was a PK, a preacher's kid. Dad was my pastor. He was a man of tremendous physical and moral strength, and I took for granted that he would always be my spiritual leader. But then the strong man was overcome by illness and had to take medical leave. It was a new experience for me, just 9 years old. I had to get used to someone else being "up there" Sabbath mornings. Although Dad was still number one, there were others. Gradually I accepted that, grudgingly at first. Finally these other preachers became role models also. Even heroes. I saw them in action, Sabbath after Sabbath, leading the people in worship. I was impressed.

Our family was now in a new situation—on the receiving end of pastoral ministry. When Dad had to be away and we children had no transportation to church school, one of our pastors without children of his own turned his car into our school bus. I began to absorb the flavor of ministry. These men became friends and mentors.

Looking back over the years, I realize that pastors have always been a blessing to me and our family. So it's with

pleasure and pride that I've always referred to each of these men of God as "my pastor." (Sorry I have to keep using the masculine gender, but I have not had a female pastor as yet.) I never hesitate to call on them in times of real need. Of course, I do not want to overburden them with trivia. Sometimes I've called upon pastors outside my locality to minister to my relatives in need, and they have always come through.

All of our pastors have been kind to our children. Little things can mean a lot. For one of my pastors to tell me that he saw my son or daughter at the college or academy and he or she was doing well—that would always make my day. Of course, sometimes our children needed a bit of caution and counsel, but even in those situations I never detected any condescending attitude on the part of my pastors. They have always seemed genuinely interested.

## **Sanctified wisdom and restraint**

If anything has approached a problem in relationships with my pastors, it has been in getting them to treat me and my family simply as members of the household of faith who have needs and anxieties and hopes just as others do, not singling us out for special treatment. I, in turn, want to be a good pastor's assistant, helping in the background but staying out of the way. I fear that I may say or do something to multiply his burdens. I regard it almost a cardinal sin to second-guess my pastor or interject myself inappropriately into the church program. Forbid it that I should ever speak from the "conference standpoint." I am not an adjunct pastor; and now being retired, I

am not the pastor emeritus. This is a delicate matter, because a few of the saints would like to exploit my situation and cause a little uneasiness. We who are older must always keep this in mind: we have had our day and must give way to today's leadership. It's only right and fair.

On the other hand, we should not have to be walking on eggshells all the time. Speaking the truth is always in order, but the law of kindness should be upon our lips. There may be times when we will have differences and disagreements with the pastor, but these instances should be few and far between. Ellen White counsels us never to short-circuit God's plan outlined in Matthew 18. "Old men for counsel" is a good saying, but we should not always be offering counsel. We need to wait until it is requested. And even then we must learn how to be "nondirective."

The pastor and the people need to know that we do not receive gossip. This is a good folk saying and worthy of note: "A dog that will bring a bone will carry one." We do not take sides in church disputes. Retired preachers ought to be models of sanctified wisdom and restraint. Happily, most of those I know are.

### Enriching leadership

Let's get to the crux of the matter. The enrichment of pastoral ministries is what it is all about. It is my responsibility. It is your responsibility. It is the first business of the church. It is the church's future. There is and always will be a critical need for leadership in every human organization, the church included. Enlightened self-interest should lead us to reach this conclusion and take concrete action. We have got to find ways to build pastors. Conference officers have to get on with the business. Church members have to take up their share of the load. We have a fine group of earnest young men and women in pastoral ministry today. They must be the focus of our attention. We have done well, but we must do better, because "the efficiency of the church is precisely what the zeal, purity, self-denial, and intelligent labor of the ministers make it."<sup>2</sup>

Strong pastors do make a difference. With the coming of the right leadership, I have seen the mood of an entire congregation lifted in a single day—the ambience, or atmosphere, the morale, every-

thing. This makes me believe in miracles. The pastor is the impact player on the team. Pastors can make it happen.

### Practical counsel

At this point I just cannot refrain from offering a little of that counsel that I've said should be contributed so sparingly.

1. *To church members.* Swear off pastor-bashing. It is too late in the day to indulge in this "harmless" parlor pastime (which turns out not so harmless because our children could be damaged for life). Don't worship pastors, either. It is not healthy for you or for them. Love them, pray for them, give them your cooperation and support. Share your best ideas. Keep the lines of communication open. Remember that the relationship we have with our pastors is a positive or negative statement to the world.

2. *To conference officers and staff.* Don't insult your pastors' intelligence with banalities like "the pastor's work is the greatest and most important," while letting, for one reason or another, administrative or departmental responsibilities take priority. Pastors don't need to hear, nor do they believe, these pious platitudes. Show your religion by your works. Create a climate conducive to fruitful and pleasant pastoral ministries. Get out in the trenches with the pastors. Stay in a district for an extended period of time as an unobtrusive assistant. Observe, listen, learn. Sit where they sit seven days (see Eze. 3:15). See that they get their due. Make pastor-friendly policies and carry them out. Management people in cutting-edge businesses do this all the time. This beats wordy pronouncements any day.

3. *For pastors.* You have got to believe in your work, in your calling, and in the people you serve. Self-pity is futile. Look to the Lord for your support; He knows your worth. When Ellen White says, "At this time we must gather warmth from the coldness of others, courage from their cowardice, and loyalty from their treason,"<sup>3</sup> she is speaking to the real world, the world where ministry takes place. We cannot be swayed by the applause of the brethren or the lack thereof. While the brethren can help you or hurt you, they can't really make you or break you. Your fortune is ultimately outside of their hands. Whether anyone else believes it or not, what pastors do for Christ will last an eternity. Make no

## Whether anyone else believes it or not, what pastors do for Christ will last an eternity.

excuses or apologies for being in pastoral ministry. You are treading out the corn that fills the crib that nourishes us all.

### The ultimate profession

Karl Menninger has a word to say to pastors who sometimes envy other professionals in the community: "The minister standing before his flock week after week, speaking to them for half an hour under aesthetic and hallowed auspices, has an unparalleled opportunity to lighten burdens, interrupt and redirect circular thinking, relieve the pressure of guilt feelings and their self-punishment, and inspire individual and social improvement. No psychiatrist or psychotherapist, even [one] with many patients, has the quantitative opportunity to cure souls and mend minds which the preacher enjoys. And the preacher also has a superb opportunity to do what few psychiatrists can, to prevent the development of chronic anxiety, depression, and other mental ills."<sup>4</sup>

Pastors, above all other professionals, because of the enormous influence they wield, should be models of spiritual and mental wholeness and wellness. The sheep of God's flock are placed in their hands, malleable, impressionable, vulnerable. To bring them to a mature, viable faith is an operation more delicate than neurosurgery!

When God calls a person to pastoral ministry, it is because He recognizes in him or her potential, capacity for growth. He sees a kind of toughness and resiliency that will withstand the inevitable heat of the kitchen. It is an awesome prospect. G. K. Chesterton had a point when he said, tongue in cheek, "We should start these ordinands as bishops and let them work their way up to where we can make them parish priests." The care of souls is far and away the most demanding task of all. Each one is unique.

As C. S. Lewis observed: "There are no ordinary people. You have never talked to a mere mortal."

### Aiming at the enemy

Finally, the church militant is facing the crisis of crises. When the chips are down and the lines drawn, we shall discover that we need one another. Our weapons must be aimed at the enemy, not at ourselves. We cannot afford the energy it takes to fight imaginary battles. You will remember the admiral who

spent his ammunition on temple spires because they were adorned with crosses and then was unable to cover the ground troops when the real battle started. Internecine struggles are terribly debilitating. Our real foe out there is deadly, cunning, and wily; we cannot afford to give him any quarter. He would be happy to set us at each other's throat. He would destroy our families and our churches. But "the powers of darkness stand a poor chance against believers who love one another as Christ has loved them."<sup>5</sup>

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PRACTICAL CONTEMPORARY POWERFUL

The pastor's ministry is representative. His or her ministry authenticates the ministry of the whole people of God. "Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom the master has put in charge of the servants in his household to give them their food at the proper time?" (Matt. 24:45).\* "It was he [Christ] who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up" (Eph. 4:11, 12). "The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching" (1 Tim. 5:17). The pastoral assignment is encompassed in the Master's words "Feed my lambs . . . Feed my sheep" (John 21:15-17). Feeding, leading, and equipping are the terms of reference. We really are a team. The situation calls for solidarity in the ranks.

The church has done a good job in the support of its servant leaders. Let us give credit to our brother and sister administrators who have under God developed the organization, the infrastructure, the system, that makes full-time ministry possible. We all need affirmation and understanding. Let us speak kindly of one another. If we are to be used of God to grow up a church that attains "to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ" (Eph. 4:13), we must ourselves grow out of our pettiness and narrowness so that we can see the big picture, see the value and worth of our brothers and sisters in ministry. This 1888 Ellen White comment is fitting: "When we look at these matters without prejudice, we shall see some things to excuse and some things to commend, and fewer to censure."<sup>6</sup> ■

\* All Scripture texts in this article are from the New International Version.

<sup>1</sup> I am the fellow who had the temerity to convene 24 pastors and elders in the North American Division for a conference in 1981. Their discussion of pastoral ministry was reported in *Ministry*, August 1981.

<sup>2</sup> Ellen G. White, *Testimonies* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1948), vol. 5, p. 582.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 136.

<sup>4</sup> Karl Menninger, *Whatever Became of Sin?* (New York: Bantam Books, 1988), pp. 200, 201.

<sup>5</sup> *The SDA Bible Commentary*, Ellen G. White Comments (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1980), vol. 5, p. 1141.

<sup>6</sup> *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials* (Washington, D.C.: Ellen G. White Estate, 1987), vol. 1, p. 106.

# Hooray for human(e) pastors!

**Fern Gibson Babcock**

## A Year of the Pastor salute from a teacher



*Fern Gibson Babcock, author of Love's Gentle Promise, is director of the teaching materials center at Southern College.*

**L**ooking back over your years of teaching, what have you and your students really liked about pastors?" That question, which forms the basis of this article, threw me into a frenzy of reminiscing. Who had been good with the students? Which pastors had helped me as a teacher?

One special minister popped into my mind and put a grin on my face. He not only had encouraged me to bear my burdens, but had gotten beneath the load and helped me lift it.

### **Rob Vandeman**

While teaching in Maryland, I found it difficult to recruit chaperons for the ninth- and tenth-grade year-end trip. In desperation, I asked our pastor, Rob Vandeman, if he would go to New England with us. The kids liked him, and I hoped that they could get better acquainted with their pastor on the trip. Although he administered a large, busy church, Rob agreed to drive and chaperon.

Ten hours in a van full of teenagers thoroughly tested his Christianity. When necessary, he would speak firmly to his passengers, but in such a reasonable manner that the students were not offended. And as long as they weren't hurting anything, he was flexible enough to let the kids be young and foolish. He *did* suggest a change of tune, however, when they began the fifty second verse of "99 Bottles of Pop on the Wall!"

After a day of driving, he joined in a basketball game before spreading his sleeping bag on the gym mat with the boys. He even helped the guys booby-trap the gym door in case the girls invaded! Rather than staying with nearby friends, he ate what we ate and lived like we did. He took his turn at worship and prepared a brief, meaningful message for our Sabbath service.

Back at school I began to appreciate Rob's way of handling complaints from parents. He would listen sympathetically and then ask them to talk to the teacher first, the principal second, the school board chairman third, and if all else failed, get back to him! I liked dealing with complaints myself instead of having someone else solve my problems.

### **Fred Hughes**

Delving further back into the past, I remembered another pastor, J. Fred Hughes, who supervised the construction of our church. Sunday after Sunday found him laboring beside his members. The teenagers enjoyed learning the techniques of wood staining or sanding from their pastor.

After we moved into the new facility, Elder Hughes arranged a unique Communion service. While parents engaged in foot washing, the pastor took all the children outside. There, at the edge of the woods, he stood before three life-sized wooden crosses to tell the story of the Crucifixion and the meaning of Communion. As a teacher who daily sought ways to convey God's love to children,

I really appreciated Pastor Hughes's efforts to make the death of Christ real and personal to the children.

### Visiting speakers

During my 11 years at Spencerville Junior Academy, we teachers interacted with youth pastors, assistant pastors, constituent pastors, and Week of Prayer speakers. Not all understood young people or related well to them. Those ministers who paid little attention to children at church received little attention from them when they came to speak at the school.

At times various pastors held a weekly assembly for us. We could always count on some to be there with a meaningful message. Others often called in to cancel—or didn't show at all. This made us feel that other things were more important than we were.

Baptismal classes provided a special test of a pastor's relationship with the kids. I think of the time Cindy returned from a session looking upset. I asked what was wrong.

"That pastor!" she exploded. "This was our eighth Bible study, and he still kept calling me Ellen, even after I corrected him. If he can't get my name right, I don't want him to baptize me!" And she dropped out of the class.

Of all age groups, youth are perhaps

the most likely to sense insincerity or show. Some visiting speakers tried to entertain. Students laughed but later made fun of the shallow presentations. They were, however, quick to respond to someone with a genuine concern for their souls. Whenever good speakers brought a serious message liberally sprinkled with pointed illustrations, the youth listened and responded favorably.

I especially appreciated speakers who calmly called for decisions. In today's society, one is rarely called upon to make a firm decision for God. In our attempts to eliminate the long, emotional appeals of the past, perhaps we have a tendency to skip decision calls altogether, especially in youth meetings. But today's young people *want* to be challenged. When I asked one student why he hadn't been baptized, he responded, "No one ever asked me to." I realized then that I was as much at fault as the pastor.

### An anonymous good shepherd

Veteran missionary Marion Brown told me of a turning point in her life. When she and a girlfriend ran away from academy, they hitchhiked south for three days until picked up by the police. When the school wouldn't take her back, Marion went home. It seemed to her that everyone had questions about the escapade,

and since Marion felt that most of her inquisitors were merely collecting information for gossip, she resented it deeply. She refused to discuss the matter with anyone, even her mother.

Then the pastor stopped by. As he came up the walk, Marion freshened her lipstick and prepared to act streetwise. Everyone thought she was a tramp anyway. But to her surprise, the minister greeted her warmly.

"You don't know how thankful we are to have you back safe and sound, Marion," he announced, with genuine concern. "We had special prayer for you until you were found. It's tough being a teenager, isn't it?"

Marion could hardly believe her ears.

"I've heard you'll be home the rest of the year," the pastor continued, "and I was wondering if you'd consider being our Sabbath school secretary. We're such a small church, we need everyone to make it run right. You're good with reports and things like that. Would you be our secretary?"

Tears filled Marion's eyes as the love in his voice melted her rebellion.

"But I can't," she protested. "I'm too bad."

The pastor smiled and shook his head kindly. "I don't think you're a bad girl, Marion. You're a good girl who made a mistake. We love you and so does the Lord, and I know you'll make a fine secretary. Will you do it?"

Marion nodded, unable to speak. After the pastor left, she asked her mother's forgiveness and then wept with her. The pastor's unconditional acceptance and his faith in her ability broke down her barriers. Today Marion testifies that those few kind words changed her life.

### Ron Cook

A young teaching couple also told me how their pastor's kindness blessed their lives. Bobbi and Alton Whidden had just moved to a new conference when they were asked to attend a teachers' convention. Their little daughter, however, was not invited. What could they do with Andrea? To their amazement, Pastor Ron Cook took their problem upon himself. During his welcome visit to their home, he offered to take Andrea to his home for the week to stay with his two girls. Years have passed, but the Whiddens still speak of that pastor with warmth and love.

## Teachers like pastors who:

- Join in a school work bee
- Help take the kids out Ingathering
- Tell the children's story at church
- Take time to talk to young people
- Share the credit for a baptism with the child's teachers
- Help to take students out on community projects
- Support the teachers in school board meetings
- Plan for children and youth in church activities
- Use young people in worship services
- Keep counseling sessions strictly confidential
- Are honest and nonpolitical
- Treat teachers as equals, not inferiors
- Ask how they can help the school
- Play ball with the students occasionally
- Help to work out plans for financing worthy students
- Don't expect special treatment for their children.

Information obtained from a survey of teachers

Another pastor showed a most unusual level of support by offering to teach for a day and give the teacher time off. Another took a stack of spelling books home one weekend and brought them back graded Monday morning. Such acts show that some pastors recognize what a difficult job teaching is.

### What the youth say

I've shared some of the things teachers appreciate about their pastors, but what do the young people like? I surveyed about 120 teenagers, and on the whole responses were positive and revealing. They like a pastor who sees them as individuals, who will call them by name and ask them about their lives.

"Hi, Johnny! Still pitching those fast balls?" "Hey, Suzy! Nice catch!" Such comments warm the hearts of the hearers and are perceived as: "The pastor knows who I am and cares about me and my life."

Asked for specifics, academy students gave these replies: "Elder Bietz called me on my birthday to ask how my life was. No pastor had ever called me before for anything. That was so special!"

"I went with my pastor to chop wood for an old lady. We had a great time."

"Our pastor told me, 'Scott, you really add life to our Pathfinder group.' That really made me feel good."

"I liked working with Pastor when we painted the church."

"My dad's a preacher, and I like it when he asks my advice on his sermons."

"Our pastor spent hours with our family when my parents were splitting up. We would go to his house and talk and talk. He and his wife never made us feel less than a real family, even though we had problems."

"I appreciate our pastor because once when my friend and I got into trouble with our parents, he talked to them and got things straightened out for us."

"Our academy Bible teacher, Victor Brown, made us boys part of his family. We loved Friday nights at his house in front of the fire. He talked us into giving Bible studies, too, and when one girl gave her heart to the Lord, Pastor Brown insisted that we boys go into the water and stand with him during her baptism because we'd brought her to Christ. That was a real thrill!"

"The minister came to the hospital to see me the day after I checked in. He really cared."

"At camp, Buz Menhardt used to just sit by us and let us talk. We'd talk to him about anything because we never felt he was judging us."

"I like the way our pastor asks us to do things instead of ordering us to do them."

"When he joins us in sports, our pastor always plays fair. He doesn't call shots in his favor just because he's an adult."

"Our pastor isn't high and mighty. He's a real human. He makes mistakes, too, and he admits it."

### Mike Stevenson

One mother told me how much the youth of her church like their pastor,

Mike Stevenson, Jr. An hour after teaching a Sabbath school lesson in which he compared struggling Christians to Olympic athletes looking for the judges' scorecards, Mike rose in church and made an eloquent offering appeal. At the close, he glanced down at the teenagers on the front row—and nearly lost his composure. Each grinning youth was holding up a church bulletin-scorecard with 8, 9, or 10 penciled on the back. The pastor's young friends had rated his offering appeal!

What makes a pastor score a 10 with teachers and youth? Honesty, a sense of humor, caring concern, and love—character traits that come from a close association with the One whose love he or she is trying to convey. And after all, isn't that what pastoring is all about? ■

## Our pastors

### Peggy Harris

Our pastors give us help ministering to our congregation.

This motley group of Christians, who come in all stages of spiritual growth, all have needs that are being met.

We can give to our pastors our help, encouragement, enabling, so that together we can bring our church into the kind of close-knit congregation that lights fires from the sparks shared by the Holy Spirit.

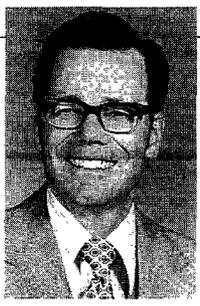
This caring, sharing together is what makes our church vibrant!

Written in celebration of the Year of the Pastor and in appreciation of our Beltsville, Maryland, pastoral staff, Norman and Kathy Yergen, Craig and Tina Heinrich.

# Reflections on pastoral ministry

Clayton R. Jepson

## Looking back over four decades of ministry



Clayton R. Jepson  
is a retired minister  
in Loveland,  
Colorado.

**T**hat Bedford tinker, John Bunyan, in his classic allegory, sketched a portrait of a Spirit-filled gospel minister. It remains to this day a striking depiction of our high calling:

“Christian saw the picture of a very grave person hang up against the wall; and this was the fashion of it: it had eyes lifted up to heaven, the best of books in his hand, the law of truth was written upon his lips, the world was behind its back. It stood as if it pleaded with men, and a crown of gold did hang over its head.”<sup>1</sup>

Plainly, John Bunyan’s was a high view. It’s appropriate to wonder whether such a concept of the ministry is too impractical for our technological society with its computerized lifestyle. Can any mere human, partaking of the depravity characteristic of all mortals, presume to qualify for such divine service? Having lived 40 years in the tensions of such a life, I’ve come to believe that the grace of God makes a possibility of what we in ourselves cannot do.

Even so, through the years I’ve suffered self-doubt, conflicts, and role ambiguity crises.<sup>2</sup> Discussing this with others, I discovered that I was not alone with such feelings. Pastors must be so many things to so many people; often they feel lost in the maze of manifold expectations.

### Concerns about church structure

Among pastors I’ve also sensed for some time a widespread unease about church structure. One may wholeheartedly accept church teachings and still

feel restless about aspects of church organization, leadership, and policies. I love our church and fully affirm its divine calling, but on occasion I’ve felt disappointed about what seems to be hypocrisy, a lack of integrity, apathy, and self-interest. At such times I’ve had to remind myself that the church has no existence of itself apart from the people who comprise it. It is people, after all, who are liable to disappoint us.

How do we cope with concerns about the church? One of our old-timers, Roy L. Benton, once remarked to a critic who had left the church: “You know, I’m not surprised at what you are saying. I knew those things were wrong with the church before you were born.”

“You did?”

“Yes, but I’ve learned one thing. If you want to clean house you can’t do it from outside: you’ve got to be inside.”

My conviction for years has been that much spiritual work needs to be done *inside* the church, and this has been a prime objective of my ministry. Sometimes I’ve confided to the conference president my desire for winning souls *inside* the church. One good man, burdened as he was for lost souls outside, would express alarm that I must be opposed to evangelism. But no, I wasn’t. On the contrary: if a church is alive, if the members know God and have faith in Jesus Christ as their Saviour, then outreach evangelism will be all the more effective. Members will be living witnesses, and people in the marketplace will be listening.

One hazard of working within a church organization is the ease with which one can flow with the tide. There can develop a kind of organization men-

tality. Some find it easy to become people pleasers, stifling convictions of their own. I tried to avoid an organization mentality by looking at my job, not as an assignment from the conference president, but rather as a commission from Christ to prepare for His coming. Viewed in that light, every worthwhile project took on spiritual importance and contributed to the spirituality of my congregation.

### Overcoming resentment

High on the scale of success factors for ministers stands the matter of interpersonal relationships. Although I could not suppress personal convictions when they failed to reflect the prevailing viewpoint, neither could I afford a rigid inflexibility that refused to recognize merit in others' views. I had to learn to disagree and remain decent about it.

In the business of pastoring, occasions for encountering resentful feelings are legion. But ill will tends to melt when we look people in the eye week after week, smile, give a cheery greeting, and inquire sincerely about something of concern to them. Sometimes an honest apology is in order.

I credit my time in South Asia for many lessons in getting along with others. One supreme challenge came when Bill,<sup>3</sup> chairman of the building committee, was leading a discussion about bids for construction. The architect was present. Somehow Bill began accusing the architect of receiving financial favors from subcontractors. Naturally, this professional man felt insulted and threatened to give up the project. Bill responded by submitting his resignation on the spot.

It was an extremely delicate moment. I tried to mollify Bill's words and apologized to the architect. After closing the meeting, I sought out Bill and persuaded him to remain on the committee. I continued to work closely with him, and as the project moved forward he seemed to place more confidence in me. He also maintained his generous contributions to the building fund.

Finally the edifice was complete. On our first Sabbath service in it, Bill turned to me and remarked: "Pastor, I feel great about our new church. We had a fine architect and a good builder."

Suddenly I felt a great burden lifted and an overflowing gratitude. We had saved not only Bill's continued sizable

contributions to the project—at least 15 percent of the total expense—but, of greater importance, his good will and loyalty to the church. I am both proud and humbled by the way God worked through me in that volatile situation.

### The notion of promotion

In measuring ministerial success, I believe we often misunderstand the concept of promotion within denominational employment. Some of us perceive that the position of church pastor is but a stepping-stone to "larger responsibilities."<sup>4</sup> As a result, we have struggled to build a cadre of superior pastors and keep them in the field. Some of our most dynamic ministers are drawn into other types of service. As important as those positions may be, nothing is more vital than building vibrant, mature, soul-winning congregations.

I feel grateful that throughout my ministry I resisted opportunities to be "promoted" from the pastorate. I felt I had already reached the top while serving in hamlets, towns, and cities, both in this country and abroad. My most cherished memories are of individuals I've helped come to Christ and grow up in Him.

### Doing it over again

Without reservation, if I could turn back the clock and hear again the call to proclaim the gospel, I'd tell the Lord: "Here am I; send me!" Looking back over four decades of ministry, there are some things I'd do differently.

Many things I'd do the same. Here are some I would consider especially critical:<sup>5</sup>

*I would serve the church, not exploit it.* The trusting regard people develop in their pastor is too precious to be taken advantage of. It's easy for ambitious ministers to pull strings and use people for their own ends, but the cause of Christ suffers and the congregation is weakened thereby.

*I would look well to my preaching.* There are no shortcuts to effective preaching. The right preparation of a sermon requires continuous preparation of the preacher. I would get all the college and seminary work possible, read heavily in the best books, enroll in refresher courses, and saturate my soul in Bible study and prayer.

I would preach the strong, vital themes of Scripture and relate them to the needs of the audience. The late H.M.S. Richards

## Nothing is more vital than building vibrant, mature, soul-winning congregations.

struck a vital nerve when he taught pastors that the greatest need in our churches is strong Bible preaching. I would portray clearly the conflict between light and darkness and preach the truth in Christ as Adventists understand it. And like Dwight L. Moody, no matter what my sermon text, I would take the most direct route to the cross and call for action in response.

*I would be pastor of all the people.* All pastors are tempted to cultivate the affluent and the influential to the neglect of the rest. But if the pastor doesn't support "insignificant" members, where will they find anyone who will? Those who have but little in resources or talents should be able to say "my church" with as deep a sense of belonging as anyone else. Of course, wealthy and talented people have hurts too. Everyone needs recognition and encouragement.

*I would be out among the people.* Despite the encroachments of management-type work, I would maintain daily personal visitation. This would include interested people outside the church family. I would set aside for people several afternoons a week as well as odd times morning, noon, and night. Such a program isn't easy, but a pastor can't minister to people's needs from formal church contacts alone.

Who in the flock needs this type of shepherding? The alcoholic needs your visit, and so does the pregnant single woman, the teenager trapped in drugs, the person who lost a job or perhaps a house, the nonattender, the sick, the bereaved, the disillusioned, and the distraught—and even those who are enjoying success in life.

*I would be a part of my community.* Like it or not, we live in this world. The ills of society are our problems too. I would urge my people to be active in civic and community affairs. I myself would be involved in the community ministerial association, the hospital chaplaincy program, and health educa-

tion seminars. I would serve as a volunteer police chaplain, something I never did. I would seek membership in a civic club. I would attempt to influence public opinion by writing more letters to the newspaper editor.

*I would guard my attitudes.* If pastors hope to encourage Christian attitudes and ethical principles in others, they must take careful stock of their own. Thus I would seek to be Christlike toward people regardless of race, class, or creed.

*I would be loyal to my church.* This includes denominational leadership and all fellow believers. At the same time I would speak out against wrongdoing wherever it may be found. I would also seek to maintain ethical behavior toward fellow ministers, the church, and my neighbors.

*I would keep fit in my health and finances.* A pastor's health is important to everyone, and I would do whatever possible to maintain it. I would also be honest in the stewardship of money and not leave unpaid bills behind me.

*I would avoid professional jealousies.* This includes engaging in exclusiveness or competition with fellow ministers. I would seek no special gratuities. I would not be a party to marriage or funeral rackets. I would never embarrass successors by meddling in the affairs of churches I had formerly served.

*I would dare more for God.* Most of us apply too much weight to our fears. I would stifle my inhibitions and expect God to see me through in greater plans and bolder enterprises. I would exercise faith more diligently.

*Finally, I would depend more upon God.* I would bolster my ministry through aggressive prayer and vigorous claims on the power of the Holy Spirit. Since God's purposes may require more time than do ours, I would not be "of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who have faith and keep their souls" (Heb. 10:39, RSV). ■

<sup>1</sup> John Bunyan, *The Pilgrim's Progress* (London: J. M. Dent and Sons, Ltd., 1677), p. 32.

<sup>2</sup> See Michael G. McBride, "Role Conflict and Role Ambiguity Applicable to the Local Pastor in the North Pacific Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists" (D.Min. project, Andrews University, 1984), pp. 17, 18.

<sup>3</sup> pseudonym.

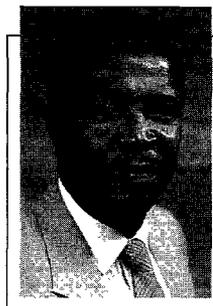
<sup>4</sup> Robert Spangler, "What's Wrong With Being a Pastor?" *Ministry*, June 1982, pp. 26, 27.

<sup>5</sup> I am indebted for some thoughts here to F. E. Davison, *I Would Do It Again* (St. Louis: Bethany Press, 1948).

# Local pastors: the voice of the ministry

Walter Douglas

**Local pastors are  
in a better position  
to speak about the  
future of the church.  
Let us hear more  
from them.**



*In addition to being professor of history of religion at the Theological Seminary, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan, Walter Douglas, Ph.D., is the senior pastor of All Nations Church, Berrien Springs.*

**I** have been watching with interest the many recent articles and seminars about pastoral ministry that have appeared in our denominational publications. It strikes me as curious, however, that most of the authors and the seminar leaders are often not themselves practicing pastors.

Perhaps it's presumptuous, from one point of view, for academicians working mostly within an institution and for church administrators dealing mostly with administration, to say what will and ought to be the future of ministry in the Adventist Church. It seems that pastors in local congregations are in a better position to speak about that, along with informed laypersons.

Practically speaking, pastors involved so deeply in ministry must be the ones to bring a theological critique on their practice, so that the people to whom they minister may grasp the relationship between the gospel and the world, and how these two interact and affect each other. Thus it is to the local pastor first and foremost that we should turn for help regarding spiritual nurture, church growth, Christian education, evangelism, ethics, theology, and liturgy. Some may disagree, but it is my view that denominational resolutions, proposals, and pronouncements have little or no authority,

unless they take seriously the role of the local pastor and congregation.

### **The church is local first**

As the denomination becomes increasingly preoccupied with structural changes, power, and global influence, there is the tendency to forget that, both biblically and theologically, the church is local first and foremost. Taken together, local congregations make up the denomination. My plea, therefore, is for more emphasis and attention on the local pastor and what he/she has to say and write about ministry and the function of the church in the nineties.

It is really local pastors who must wrestle with the practical questions and issues of ministry. They may not be the only ones, but certainly they are better prepared to deal with what is happening in the churches. Also, many honest and sincere laity are deeply concerned with matters of faith and practice regarding ministry. They are seeking solutions regarding the present state of affairs as well as the future of the church. They are open to painful theological reflection—a type of reflection that the denomination does not generally encourage in its laity. The local pastor as the practitioner has to work through these matters and develop strategies consistent with biblical paradigms that best serve the mission of the church.

Criticism of the denomination and its structure may well be deserved, since too often the intrinsic value and essential role of local congregations are minimized. Whenever this occurs, one could assume the need to revise our thinking on the nature and function of the local church. For example, the denomination might make proposals, pronouncements, policies, and resolutions on issues such as gender equality, racial justice, abortion, the environment, stewardship, unity in diversity, spirituality, Christian standards, Christian education, and the whole range of positions that are essential to the life and mission of the church. But, practically speaking, it is local pastors and their congregations that must develop strategies for fleshing out these proposals, pronouncements,

and positions. They are the agents through whom the denomination must work to bring these to fruition.

### **Importance of the local pastor**

One could argue that not all pastors are equipped to perform their functions adequately. Some might criticize them for lack of theological insight and sophistication or even express concern for their lack of evangelistic fervor. Some might raise questions about their skills as counselors. But whatever the criticism, the fact remains that pastors of local congregations are the only ones who can give form and substance to much of what the church is all about or ought to be about.

Why, then, are we not hearing more from our local pastors in our denominational publications? There is a universal gospel, but no such thing as a universal ministry or pulpit. Ministry, for all practical purposes, has to be local. And the form of ministry that works in one place

ferences and seminars on ministry, I've always been concerned that the presenters are more often academicians and church administrators. Where are the district pastors? If indeed we are serious about finding solutions to the problems that deserve attention, then we must have our pastors participate in the process. Our failure to do this has created crises in ministry for some pastors. There are those who accept a position in some "office," believing that would provide them wider influence in the denomination. Others feel that in order to gain the attention of the church they have to specialize in some new form of ministry. At risk is the minister's sense of authority as a practitioner and his/her ability to define his/her role in both church and society.

### **Local ministry: crisis and opportunity**

These are some of the manifestations of the crisis in ministry. Local congregations may suffer greatly from the tendency of some local pastors

to acquire a reputation for being great preachers, good committee persons, trained theologians, or just a pastor who is not run-of-the-mill. They soon leave their congregations for a position of "influence in the church." I believe this condition is less likely to happen if the church gives greater attention to the local pastors as the ones who are best equipped to speak and write about ministry today. The church should provide local pastors with the best possible professional training to ensure that they possess the skills and maintain the powers of discernment and discrimination that become increasingly necessary in our age. The practicing pastor ought to be able to bring the Word to bear upon the various structures by which human life is organized, influenced, controlled, and dominated.

Local pastors are called to minister out of all that they are—in their being, in their experiences, in their struggles, and in their context in history and in society. They then become the real experts and practitioners of ministry.

Let us hear more from our local pastors. ■

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## **The fact remains that pastors of local congregations are the only ones who can give form and substance to much of what the church is all about or ought to be about.**

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may be quite different from ministry in another place. This is an essential point, because I believe that the context provides the agenda for doing ministry. The church needs to explore more fully the valuable resources and network already in place for developing different strategies for ministry, mission, and evangelism. Local practicing pastors and their congregations form this network.

We need to encourage our pastors to speak out more through our publications, conferences, and seminars—and with that invitation also provide the opportunity to do so. When attending con-

# Holy oil and fiery swords

Ed Winning

**Wielding the sword without compassion is butchery. To be both compassionate and firm is a divine art.**

**W**

hen I trained to be a pastor, no one taught me how to fight. And as far as I know, not much has been written about it either. It was as though pastors didn't fight. At the time, this misperception didn't appear strange. All the ministers I had known were the epitome of patience and cooperation. It would have been almost impossible for me to picture an angry, unkind, or vengeful pastor. They were saints!

And so, unarmed, unprotected, and very vulnerable, I entered the Lord's army. Feelings of inadequacy dogged my heels, but I believed righteousness would always prevail. Although I wanted desperately to be the Lord's most courageous champion, I doubted I could ever attain such a lofty post. No ministerial intern is fully prepared to take up the Lord's banner, and I was no exception. I comforted myself with the thought that my colleagues would be supportive, sensitive, and helpful.

My training had warned and prepared me for conflict with parishioners, and I accepted that. But conflict with my fellow ministers hadn't entered my mind. For years I felt a terrible feeling of loneliness at workers' meetings. Ministers either live behind a wall of pretense, group together in tight cliques for survival, or are just plain lonely. The absence of a spirit of camaraderie is painful for a young minister. During those early years church leaders and speakers easily intimidated me. And of course, there was the usual tension and mistrust between conference leadership and pastors.

One of the first tasks assigned me was to conduct a last-day events seminar

during the midweek service. I invested much time and effort researching my facts. In those days we studied everything Ellen White wrote on the subject for any inflection that might give a clue to placing the events in their proper order. To make my presentation as clear as possible, I made fluorescent cardboard signs for each event. These I put up in sequential order on a black felt board under ultra violet light. It was something to see.

All went well until we approached the "little time of trouble." Suddenly another minister on the staff sprang to his feet to challenge my order. What shocked me the most was not him merely questioning the order, but that he was challenging my character for not placing the event where he knew it ought to be! Over the years I have forgotten the specifics of his argument, but not his attack. I can remember the hurt caused by someone from my own ranks stabbing me in public. It was a shock not easily overcome.

Eventually I recovered, and I shall never forget how my senior pastor handled the situation. He refused to take sides. Instead, he just poured oil over the troubled waters, and sure enough, they quieted down. There didn't seem to be any limit on the amount of oil that man had in his reservoir.

## **The healing oil**

The lesson of the oil carried me through the next few years. I used it when angry mothers attacked me for making a Halloween haunted house too real. They were right and I was wrong, and oil smoothed those waters, too. Once a pastor friend whom I respected and admired stopped me while coming down a flight of stairs. He poked his finger into

*The author, who writes under a pseudonym, has spent 24 years in the ministry.*

my chest and told me that "ministers shouldn't wear tie tacks." In those days they were popular and less noticeable than tie clips. I listened, and when he was done, simply removed the tack and placed it in my pocket. If it offended him, I didn't want to wear it. I haven't worn one since. Battling over such a small item didn't make much sense. And besides, tacks ruined my ties. I was trying to learn how to live at peace with the brethren. What seemed to work was to have a huge reserve of oil handy to smooth over conflicts, to learn to be a people lover.

It wasn't long until I was assigned my first solo post. It seemed that all I had going for me was my sincerity and dedication. To these God added His blessing, and the churches that I pastored grew. We were in a building improvement program, the school was prospering, and evangelism was on. Yet some in the congregation had history of low-level bickering with the pastor. They had just driven out one of the most saintly pastors I have ever known. But I thought that if I just kept the oil flowing and kept smiling I would be able to keep things at least polite.

Without warning the news came: the conference was assigning my territory to a senior pastor, and I was now to work under him. Furthermore, there was some question about my upcoming ordination. A new president had come to the field and had quickly formed opinions about me before even meeting me. My whole career was hanging on a thread that was fraying fast. Surely I could straighten it out by talking to the president. Phoning him failed to settle the issue. I decided to take a trip to the conference office to visit him personally. I expected at least a fair hearing. Instead, I experienced an iceberg wrapped in a ribbon of smiles!

Those were the most miserable days of my life. I was convinced there was no future for me in the ministry. And I was helpless to do anything about it. But God hadn't abandoned me! The new senior pastor and his wife were sensitive to our feelings and opened up their hearts and home to us. I spent literally hundreds of hours with him, talking out my pain. He applied holy oil to my heart. Eventually I was healed, my hope restored, and my vision rekindled, but only because of this wonderful man and his wife. Through his intercession I was ordained.

After more than 20 years in the ministry, the awe once associated with pastoral service wanes. I've seen actions taken toward ministers that could only be described as cruel. Place a sword of righteousness in certain hands, and a butcher is born. One Sunday my heart went out to a conference president who was voted out of office that day. He opened the meeting with smiles and fled in tears. How that man endured that pain and still returned to the ministry only God knows. But I admire him for it.

What should a minister do when someone in the congregation or conference administration advises an action contrary to policy or conscience? How do we tell a conference president that church policy is not made by any one individual, but by the General Conference in session? How do we handle situations with potential for interpersonal conflicts? Convictions and circumstances at times may demand a bold stand, but it is not always easy to argue with a conference president or a prominent member. Ministers need help in these areas. Where do ministers learn about creative tensions in problem-solving?

### **Kind and firm**

I am no longer the idealistic young pastor I once was. The years have forced me to see that oil and kindness are not the only traits a minister needs. There are situations that demand courage and the ability to speak up and be counted. The church can ill afford timid ministers. Ellen White's classic statement is just as true for pastors as others. "The greatest want of the world is the want of men—men who will not be bought or sold, men who in their inmost souls are true and honest, men who do not fear to call sin by its right name, men whose conscience is as true to duty as the needle to the pole, men who will stand for the right though the heavens fall" (*Education*, p. 57). Our church must begin to foster such persons in the ministry, persons who know how to be gentle and strong at the same time. But how do we do it? Where do we begin? Who will be the first to break the ground? And how will the rest respond?

I once worked with a pastor who illustrated the tragedy of ministering with a survival mentality. He was near retirement and had learned his survival skills well. While I say I knew him, I

really didn't. He had learned to hide his true self. He could dodge and parry as deftly as a fencing champion. All the while he was carefully studying you to see if you were "safe" to talk to. As soon as retirement came, however, he threw aside a lifetime of pretense and left the church. He officially didn't leave; he just left physically and emotionally. The smiles and politeness could no longer hold back the years of bitterness and loneliness.

I tried everything I knew to win back this wounded man, but to no avail. He could feel at home with only those who shared the same paranoia. Those years of pretense and the absence of freedom to express his opinion had destroyed trust—the very heart of human and spiritual relationships. What good are words and actions without trust? Unable to share his inmost thoughts, this man took to labeling people, judging them without benefit of clarification from them. He became impaled on his own sword because he never learned how to use it properly.

Studies reveal our youth face similar problems: they do not feel free to think for themselves in our schools and churches; they view our church not as a place of acceptance, but as one of control. If we cannot change that, how do we expect to win them through indoctrination? And if we do win them, will they in turn become like my ministerial friend?

The church I serve is crying for champions, men and women who can move the gates of this great church for the Lord. The Lord's champions need both holy oil and fiery swords. Up until now swords have had to be checked at the door before entering church. However, pastors and church members cannot function without both. To wield the sword without compassion makes one a butcher. To be only compassionate yields the gall of bitterness and loneliness. To be proficient in both is a divine art. Both demand total devotion and transparent authenticity. Sometimes I've wished to take up just one and leave the other behind. But God would not claim that type of warrior as His own.

Over the years I have seen ministers with this holy oil and fiery sword, though entirely too few. When young ministers enter the ministry they dream of doing bold things for the Lord. What is it that

*(Continued on page 28)*

# Just a youth pastor?

Steve Case

## Facts and fallacies about youth ministry



Steve Case of Sacramento, California, is president of Piece of the Pie Ministries, an organization dedicated to bringing Adventist youth into the life of the church.

**Y**

ou seem to be effective, so why doesn't the conference promote you?"

"When will you become a *real* pastor?"

"When will you grow up?"

As a youth pastor, some comments I received were complimentary, and some were not. Most feedback, positive and negative alike, failed to regard youth ministry as a profession in its own right and not just a stepping-stone to "greater" responsibilities.

### More than a training ground

Many youth pastors indeed are inexperienced interns. Sensing their lack of status in ministerial ranks, some of them eagerly anticipate having a church of their own, or at least being an associate pastor instead of "just a youth pastor." Not surprisingly, there tends to be a high turnover rate with interns, since they are being groomed for "real ministry" and will be "promoted" once they have endured their experiences with youth.

Frequently, pastors who are young automatically are assumed to be effective with youth. In reality, some ministerial interns can't relate well to fellow young adults, much less to teenagers. To place a person in youth ministry on the basis of age results in young people training pastors rather than pastors serving young people.

Why must our youth systematically receive inexperienced pastors who must learn by trial and error? Interns assigned to work with young people should re-

ceive specialized training. In fact, I believe they should work under the supervision of a youth ministry professional rather than under a senior pastor who can only groom them for conventional ministry.

For youth ministry to be regarded as a profession rather than just a stepping stone, we must dispense with the myth that a pastor becomes disqualified for it at the age of 30. The way a pastor relates to young people might change as he or she grows older, but that doesn't necessarily diminish the capacity for youth ministry.

### Nurturing youth pastors

Workers' meetings, which are geared primarily for conventional pastors, seldom meet the needs of youth pastors. A few conferences have enough youth pastors to call together for supplemental workers' meetings. Most conferences, and even some unions, do not. In such situations, youth pastors can attend nondenominational youth ministry conventions (such as the Youth Specialties national convention, Group's Youth Ministry University, etc.).

In 1987 the North American Division Church Ministries convention included youth pastors as a special focus group. Only three pastors participated. The following year, 12 did. They drafted a mission statement and affirmed the need for continuing the group for professional enrichment. In 1989 the group increased to 17. Attendees changed the term "youth pastor" to "youth ministry professional" to include campus chaplains, Bible teachers, academy deans, principals, and even departmental youth min-

istry specialists. They initiated a bimonthly newsletter, *UTH MIN*.

Because the North American Division Church Ministries convention did not take place in 1990 because of the General Conference session, the youth ministry professionals that year voted to have their own convention. More than 50 attended the event at Leoni Meadows Camp in northern California, marking the first time Adventist youth ministry professionals on the local level were the primary presenters at a convention geared specifically for their needs. Conference, union, and division youth specialists functioned as facilitators for debriefing sessions. Academic credit from Andrews University was available.

### Educational developments

For years, experience served as the sole vehicle in the Adventist Church for youth ministry training. Recently, formal education in youth ministry became available on a significant basis. In 1985 the seminary at Andrews University hired

its first full-time youth ministry professor. The doctor of ministry program now contains a youth ministry class as part of its core, and a number of doctoral candidates already have chosen a youth ministry emphasis for their projects/dissertations. In 1988 Andrews University began a youth ministry track for undergraduates majoring in theology. La Sierra University now offers a master's degree with a focus on youth ministry. Oakwood College also offers specialized training in youth evangelism.

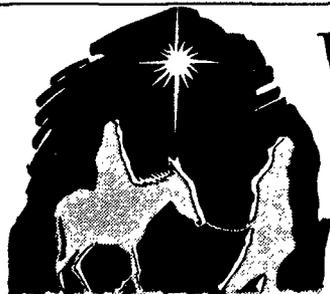
The increasing youth ministry emphasis around the North American Division has spawned the Association of Adventist Youth Ministry Professionals, based at Andrews University. With funding from the North American Division Church Ministries Department, the association has developed books, tapes, training seminars, a newsletter, consultation services, and a computer bulletin board of program ideas. Working in coordination with the association is the

John Hancock Center for Youth Ministry, located in California at La Sierra University.

### Cutting edge

The whole church can benefit from attention to youth ministry. Since new trends in society usually begin with the youth, conventional pastors might enhance both nurture and evangelism by seeking input from youth pastors. The pastor of a rapidly growing Adventist congregation told me that although he had been trained in youth ministry, he now uses that specialized training to serve the church family at large. He attributes a significant portion of congregational growth to his youth ministry methodology.

How much emphasis will local churches, pastors, administrators, colleges, and seminary curricula give to youth ministry? The answer is vital to the life and health of the Adventist Church. ■



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# The Ministry Care Line

**Carole Kilcher**

**Mental health  
overdraft protection  
that could preserve  
your family and  
your ministry.**



*Carole Kilcher is  
assistant professor  
of communication  
at Andrews  
University, Berrien  
Springs, Michigan.*

**I** pride myself on being on top of things most of the time. One particular time, though, things kind of got away from me. I was sure there was enough money in my bank account. Nevertheless, the check bounced. Before I became aware that there was a problem, the bouncing of one little check turned into a real financial fiasco.

Now I have check overdraft protection. If I overdraw on my checking account, money from my savings account is automatically transferred to checking. Since having the added protection, I have never needed it—although it's always there if I do.

The Ministry Care Line and my check protection system are, in my opinion, very similar. No pastors or teachers ever intend to be emotionally overdrawn, but for them, mental and emotional strain are among the hazards of their job. One small problem can, like the ripple effect of my one bounced check, become a temporary major crisis.

Let me tell you about a service now available in North America to employees and their families of the Seventh-day Adventist denominational system. I like to think of it as mental health overdraft protection, which, like my savings account, is a backup if ever needed.

## **Toll-free help**

The Ministry Care Line is an 800 number that connects callers to professionals at the Kettering Clergy Care Center, an affiliate of Kettering Medical

Center in Dayton, Ohio. The purpose of this toll-free number is to give church professionals and their immediate family members confidential, anonymous support and consultation when the unique problems and stresses of Christian leadership emerge.

The Ministry Care Line is staffed by trained Christian mental health workers. Dr. Bob Peach, an ordained minister with an M.S. degree in marriage and family counseling and a D.Min. degree in pastoral counseling and family ministries, coordinates the Ministry Care Line and its consultants. Consultants are available Monday through Friday from 1:30 to 4:30 p.m., Eastern Standard Time, making it possible for all regions of the United States and Canada to make contact during some part of each of the five workweek days.

In addition to being trained in crisis intervention for personal need, the consultants can assist teachers and pastors who do not have access to Christian mental health professionals in their local area. The 800 number links church leaders with mental health personnel and allows for consultation regarding difficult situations within the church or school setting. Using the Ministry Care Line in this way can help the pastor or teacher avoid mistakes. It's like having a mental health professional on the staff all the time!

Ministry Care Line consultants can also provide referrals to local area Christian mental health-care providers. Using a national database, a consultant can match the caller with a nearby service provider having the relevant expertise needed.

Designed to function as part of an organization's employee assistance program, the Ministry Care Line is not a substitute for but a complement to conference-approved counseling. The Ministry Care Line can relieve the need for long-term counseling or crises intervention by being an available resource when problems first surface. In conferences with limited resources for counseling, the Ministry Care Line can be an added resource.

#### Help without repercussions

Whether or not conferences provide counseling for employees, many employees still report to researchers that they are reluctant to seek counseling within their local conference or union conference for fear of repercussion. They also fear they will have a blemished record should the need for a recommendation arise within the Adventist system. Having mental health protection like the Ministry Care Line provides can make a significant difference in the quality of a person's life by alleviating this anxiety.

The Ministry Care Line service is currently available on a subscription basis. There is no cost to the employee or his/her family if the employer is the subscriber. The subscriber pays an annual fee based on the number of employees within its organization. The current annual subscription rate is \$16.50 per employee.

Plans are under way to expand the Ministry Care Line to include individual subscriptions. This would enable pastors, teachers, and administrators in areas where their employer does not subscribe to the service to pay an annual individual fee linking them to the 800 service.

#### Relief in troubled times

Anonymous records track statistical categories. No record is kept of those who call; however, the types of requests being made are logged. Eight percent of the calls received have asked for referrals to local counselors, 11 percent have called for consultation regarding a parishioner or student, 20 percent for a marriage or family concern, 12 percent for a personal problem, 10 percent for follow-up on a previous call, and 39 percent for information about the Ministry Care Line and its operation.

The Ministry Care Line opened its

phone bank on February 17, 1992. Since then it has served more than 1,580 eligible employee participants plus family members. It's hard to place a dollar value on what such mental health over-draft protection is really worth. Men and women who wrestle for hours in prayer seeking God's will for their lives have also benefitted from human listening ears. The 800 number linking employees to the Ministry Care Line provides the added protection they need for Christian service during the troubled final hours of earth's existence. ■

#### Free information packet

Individual employees of nonsubscribing organizations can request a free information packet by writing to Dr. Robert Peach, Ministry Care Line, 1259 East Dorothy Lane, Kettering, Ohio 45419. Phone inquiries: (513) 299-5288.

# Where are your former colleagues?



The General Conference Ministerial Association is looking for names and addresses of former Adventist pastors. We plan to send a gracious letter and establish a friendly contact with those who have left the pastorate for whatever reason—career change, discouragement, or disenfranchisement.

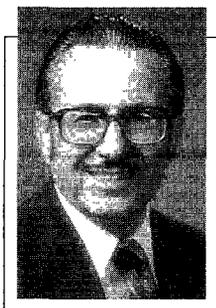
**If you know a former Adventist pastor,  
please send name and address to:**



James A. Cress, Secretary  
Ministerial Association  
General Conference  
12501 Old Columbia Pike  
Silver Spring, MD 20904

# Please, pastor, listen to me!

Jose A. Fuentes



Jose A. Fuentes, Ph.D., is the director of the research center at Antillian Adventist University, Mayaguez, Puerto Rico.

**D**ear Pastor: This brief letter is to share with you my reaction to your visit yesterday. First, I want to thank you for responding to my invitation to come and listen. Now I would like for you to know how I felt.

When I wanted you to listen to me, I hoped for just that. So when you started giving me advice, I felt like saying, "That is not what I asked for." When I asked you to listen to me and you began to tell me why I shouldn't feel that way, you led me to keep my feelings inside. You were providing consolation before you heard all my problems. It is like putting the bandage on a wound before you have drained the pus out of it.

I wish you had just listened to me attentively. Why did you feel you had to say something or do something to solve my problems? By doing so, you denied me the opportunity to do something on my own before there was a need to reach out for outside help. All I asked was that you listen—not talk or do or console—just hear me as I pour my heart out to someone whom I trust.

Advice was not what I wanted in that particular instance. Advice is cheap; 25 cents will get me both Dear Abby and Billy Graham in the same newspaper. And I know I can do for myself. I'm not helpless. Maybe discouraged and faltering, but not helpless. When you do something for me, that reinforces my dependence. But when you accept as a simple fact that I do feel what I feel, no matter how irrational, and listen attentively as

I open my heart rather than organize my feelings, I will be able to understand what is behind these irrational feelings. Once I have emptied my heart, if I have not been able to snap out and organize my feelings, then I might come to your wisdom. Irrational feelings make sense when we understand what's behind them.

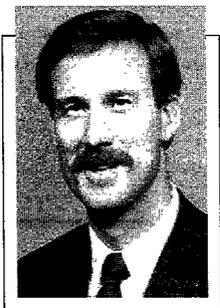
What I needed yesterday was the *ministry of your presence*. I needed your support while I was getting in touch with my (irrational) feelings. When we as individuals work them out by ourselves, we grow taller before the Lord. It is like speaking to someone whom we trust and who listens attentively and cares. Perhaps that's why prayer works for people—because God listens quietly and He doesn't give advice or try to fix things halfway through the prayer. He first allows us to do all that we can. He just listens and lets us work it out for ourselves; then He comes in and does for us what we can't do.

So please, next time, when I ask you to listen, do just that, hear me. And if you want to talk, wait a minute for your turn, and I'll listen to you—attentively.

Sincerely, yours in Christ,

*A church member*

PS: This letter was written on behalf of the thousands who never get to finish emptying their hearts before they receive interpreting, advice, consolation, and a prayer. ■



# There was a man

Mike Speegle

**T**here was a man sent from God, whose name was John. This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light" (John 1:6-8, NKJV).

This is an appropriate text for ministers. It is appropriate because of what it offers. Direction. Purpose. Counsel. Even a simple, yet well-placed, reminder. These three verses mention four significant things about John the Baptist that could be (and I hope are) true for us as well.

*First, "there was a man."* John was a simple man, he was a complex man. He was like you and me; he was subject to the same weaknesses and limitations as each of us is. He had stress, pressure, and 24 short hours to each day. John was a man—not an angel, not a supernatural unhuman creation. No, he was just a man. Now, he couldn't have been categorized as a "normal" man. Most of us wouldn't do well in a normalcy test, but what set him apart was something different.

*Second, "there was a man sent from God."* Although he was a man with human limitations, John was distinguished and set apart from others by his direction. He was a man sent "from God." He had a sense of who he was, what he was, and why he was out in that "Godforsaken" region. He had purpose. And nothing is more crucial for a minister than having purpose. It helps one go places you wouldn't ever go and say

things one wouldn't ever say, if it were not for that purpose and direction that come from above.

*Third, "there was a man sent from God" "to bear witness of the Light."* John had a simple, one-line job description: "to bear witness of the Light." He talked, pointed, preached, exhorted people toward Christ, the Light of the world. That was John's sole and soul mission. He preached with power, paved the path, primed the pump, prepared the people, performed his part, pointed to the Great Proximate.

And therein lies some good counsel for us. Maybe we need to include that again in our job description as truly number one in the "what we are about" category. Maybe we need to make that

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**No matter what,  
it is always the  
year of the pastor  
in God's calendar.**

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the only thing we are about: pointing people toward the Light, preparing the way for His coming. Period.

*Last, "He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light."* John knew he wasn't the Light, even though others sometimes wondered if he was. John never let it go to his head, because he knew that he was simply "a man," who was "sent from God" to do one thing: "bear witness." Most of us don't have the problem of hat size increasing, yet we can get the old "Messiah complex" when we let pride of church size, area of responsibility, ability, etc., creep up into our cranium. That's why direc-

tion is so important, why purpose and the ability to take counsel are so important.

This passage also contains a simple reminder, which can be summed up in two words: balance and perspective. "He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light." There is only one Light, and keeping that Light always before us will help us stay balanced, with everything in proper perspective.

When I heard that 1993 was the Year of the Pastor, my initial impression was, "So what? Is it really going to make any difference for me? Is my church all of a sudden going to respond in some new and great way?" Honestly, I'm not sure. I'm not sure how the message is going to be received by my congregation, I'm not sure how it's going to get to them without sounding self-serving. But one thing I know for sure: the message needs to get to them—and to us. We need their help and support, and they need ours. And as ministers we also need a word from our Sponsor. God wants the same things that were said about John the Baptist said about me—and you. No, not that we dress funny! He wants us to realize that we are simple people—we have limitations. But we are people sent from God—we have divine authorization. We are people sent from God to bear witness of the Light—we have a heavenly commission. We are people sent from God, bearing witness to the Light, but we are not the Light—we need to have a perspective-oriented existence.

Maybe that's one good thing that can happen out of this "Year of . . ." reminding ourselves why we truly are ministering. And remember one thing: no matter what, it's always the "Year of the Pastor" on God's calendar because just as He sent John to prepare the way, He sends us to prepare it—one more time. ■

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Mike Speegle is the staff pastor of Marietta Seventh-day Adventist Church, Marietta, Georgia.

# Win them and hold them

**Miguel Angel Cerna**

**How to assimilate members and prevent dropouts.**



*Miguel Angel Cerna is senior pastor of the Norwalk Spanish church, a field director for Hispanic work of the Southern California Conference, and a special assistant editor of Ministry.*

**P**astor, I'm so glad I came to know Jesus and this church! Five years ago I was planning to commit suicide. Somehow God never let that happen. He wanted me to know the gospel for myself and also have a ministry for Christ in helping others. This has kept me happy in the church."

That testimony from a single parent came just two days ago in a gathering of small group leaders of my church. Many of them had been drug addicts or drunkards disregarding Christ and His gospel; now they were happy in Jesus and serving Him. These lay leaders had been evangelized by church members from similar backgrounds. After baptism, our strategy for assimilating new members helped keep them in the church.

The challenge of assimilating members while avoiding dropouts has proven difficult. Why? We don't have to struggle to keep family members physically alive. We just do what we need to do, at times almost unconsciously, and they stay and grow. Why is it so difficult to survive and thrive spiritually? Because the devil is at work? I don't think so. Satan would like to destroy us even physically so he would not have to worry about destroying us spiritually. I believe the answer is more simple—and also more profound—than we imagine.

#### **More than talk**

The devil has a well-studied strategy to limit evangelism by keeping us talk-

ing about it and studying it without actually doing it. And so we've become specialists in producing materials, attending seminars, discussing our lack of commitment to evangelize, etc. Meanwhile, we fail to appropriate inspired counsel about winning and holding members. Even worse, those of us in administrative positions have shunned our responsibility to hold accountable the workers whom we serve.

How are we to assimilate members? The principles are all there. But first let us share some basic facts about membership loss in the average church: a typical church each year loses between 2 and 3 percent of members through transfer; urban churches can lose 15-20 percent. Also, between 1 and 2 percent of members will die. Then there is the problem of backsliding. Every year through apostasy we lose between 2 and 6 percent. Of these, 85 percent leave the same year they came in.

So if you have 750 members on the books, you can expect to lose 75 of them through transfer, death, or reversion. This means you need 75 new members *just to break even*. In the average church about 12-15 percent of visitors become members in 9-12 months. Thus, in a church of 750 members, you need 550 visitors annually just to break even.

An officer of the Pacific Union of Seventh-day Adventists reported that his territory has lost 87,933 members in the past 40 years, presently 250 to 300 per month. He also said that the North American Division has lost approximately 500,000 in the past four decades. And

how about those many more members who are on the books but have not attended for many years?

### Too many ministries?

What is the solution to this awesome problem? Adding another ministry in the church? No, never has the church had more ministries than now. There are usher ministries, bus ministries, telephone ministries, prison ministries, visitation ministries, greeter ministries, counseling ministries, etc. There are children's ministries, junior high school ministries, senior high ministries, collegiate ministries, singles' ministries, adults' ministries, etc. Where in the Bible do we see all these ministries and the dozens I'm not mentioning?

There are choir ministries, singing ministries, prayer ministries, etc., yet we still lose thousands per month. We must be doing something wrong, or better said, not doing something that we should. All I know is that if we want something we have never had, we must do something we have never done.

Life is simple. Church life is simple, too. I believe we have overburdened ourselves with too many ministries, when all God requires of us pastors is to train our members and nurture our members in sharing Christ. This is not done by simply praying about or seeking a revival. I believe too many prayer and revival meetings can be an escape from seriously doing our work.

It is true that the church was born from prayer, but remember that nothing really happened to make the church grow until Peter preached. Preaching to unbelievers, sharing Christ, giving Bible studies and evangelizing are necessary functions of the church. All the prayers and revivals in the world will not relieve us from performing the task God has given us.

### Small groups are the key

Before people become members they are visitors. And did you know that 70-90 percent of all visitors attend because

someone invited them? So we must begin there, by training our members to bring and receive visitors. Then, after their baptism, we need to hold them.

How? The number one reason for dropping out is the lack of permanent friendships. I believe there are two basic factors in keeping people and assimilating members: (1) we must organize small groups in which they can be nurtured and develop friendships; (2) we must teach them that as surely as there is a place in heaven for them, there is a place for them to work for God on earth. Small groups provide both a place for nurturing friendships and an evangelistic action unit.

Nothing is as powerful or as simple in winning and keeping converts as the fellowship and training of small groups. If you join my church today without joining a small group, and if you are still a member one or two years from now, I will be surprised.

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## All I know is that if we want something we have never had, we must do something we have never done.

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Ellen White wrote: "The formation of small companies as a basis of Christian effort has been presented to me by One who cannot err."<sup>1</sup> This inspired counsel concurs with the instruction given in Exodus 18, where we read that Moses organized Israel into small groups.

### Small groups for visitors

Our local congregation is so committed to organizing small groups that visitors join them even before baptism. Also we have four small groups that new members progressively attend. Specially trained church elders teach these classes as part of their pastoral responsibilities. Each class represents a developmental

stage or milestone in Christian living.

### Class 1: Getting to know Christ (salvation)

Born again  
Added to the church  
Sabbath attendance  
Eager to grow

### Class 2: Growing in Christ (stability)

Basic knowledge of the Bible  
Attending and belonging to a small group  
Studying the Sabbath school lesson  
Enjoying fellowship

### Class 3: Giving to Christ (service)

Bringing the tithe  
Active in spiritual gifts  
Sharing faith  
Enlisting a prayer partner

### Class 4: Giving for Christ (evangelism)

Heart for the world  
Operating in love  
Mobilizing for mission  
Encouraging others to attend church

As members progress from class to class, knowing they have four classes to complete, they keep a "looking forward to" attitude that fosters maturity, development, and assimilation. Following baptism, those not yet members of a small group are invited to another small group where they review the basics and experience further fellowship. Afterward, these small groups will nurture their spiritual gifts and teach them to witness.

### A gift to God

Our mandate is clear: "Christ intends that His ministers shall be educators of the church in gospel work. They are to teach the people how to seek and save the lost."<sup>2</sup> In this Christmas season, let's present Jesus with the gift of a church organized and trained to serve Him, winning and keeping the souls for whom He died. ■

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<sup>1</sup> Ellen White, *Testimonies* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1948), vol. 7, pp. 21, 22.

<sup>2</sup> ———, *The Desire of Ages* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1940), p. 825.

# New Members Need . . .

James A. Cress

- **Acceptance.**

The new birth produces spiritual infants. Even at baptism, members are not spiritually mature, nor should we expect them to behave as if they were. Sanctification develops through discipleship. Accept new believers the way Jesus does—loving them both for what they are and for what they will become by His Spirit.

- **Parenting.**

Nurture of newborns is essential. New believers, like newborn babies, demand lots of time, energy, and care. Failure to provide for their needs is spiritual child abuse. Assign all new members a caring spiritual guardian who will patiently nurture their growth.

- **Information.**

Although a new believer has mentally embraced the doctrines of the church and made a deep spiritual commitment, he or she may not know the jargon of our culture. Certain terms that we might take for granted seem foreign and confusing. Excellent resource materials are available to initiate new members and acquaint them with Adventist culture.

- **Instruction.**

An initial hearing and even acceptance of biblical doctrine are not sufficient to establish it firmly in the mind, much less in the daily life. New believers need ongoing instruction from the Scriptures in the essentials of belief and practice. Review the great themes of Scripture until they are able to articulate them for themselves. Preach the messages that brought them to conversion. Rehearse often the wonderful works of God. Exhort new members in righteousness.

- **Fellowship.**

Leaving the world and becoming a believer often means leaving friends and relationships or even suffering abandonment from former friends. Friendship and fellowship are important elements of binding new believers to the church family. Small groups that include established members as well as new members are an excellent way to build new friendships.

- **Activity.**

No one enjoys feeling useless. Most new believers assume that they will become active and productive members of the congregation. Far too many are left on the sidelines to watch as others who are already too busy attempt to meet all the needs in the congregation. The energy and commitment of new believers often exceeds that of longer-term parishioners. Their personal experience of God's grace provides a powerful witness in sharing what Jesus has done for them. Determine that you will engage each new member in meaningful work for Jesus Christ.

- **Obedience.**

Sanctification is a lifelong, ongoing journey toward Christlikeness. Obedience must be learned by young believers just as it must be learned by young children. This is not salvation by works. It is, indeed, experiencing the Lordship of Jesus in the personal life. If a believer's life has not matured and obedience has not grown over the course of time, discipleship is not occurring. Ask new members periodically to evaluate themselves regarding their personal obedience to God's requirements.

- **Vision.**

New members need to look beyond their own needs to the wider arena of unselfish ministry. They need to develop an eye for church growth, a vision for reaching the world. Global mission must thrill and challenge the whole church, and personal and world mission should be kept especially before new believers. Repeatedly focus on the gospel commission as the objective for the church and ask new members to discover their own role in proclaiming the good news.

- **Goals.**

Baptism and church membership is not the final goal; discipleship is. New believers are disciples only when functioning as ministers for Jesus. Don't let them become pew warmers. Determine that all new members will develop their full potential for service.



# The fear of the pastor

James A. Cress

**R**ecently I asked a group of colleagues to reflect on *the Year of the Pastor* by contemplating the question: *What is the fear of the pastor?* Their responses show “the hopes and fears of all the years.”

- *I wonder if I will leave a mark on this earth. I plan on doing God's will and then spend my time putting out fires. Have I made a difference?*
- That my reasons for pastoring will fade and that my efforts will go toward sustaining an institution more than a remnant movement.
- *That after I have preached to others I might become a castaway. It's tempting to become cynical, critical and hardened after many years.*
- That I might lose my own family. Myriad demands on my time and attention make it is easy to justify spending all for the church leaving little for my family—all the while saying they are my first priority!
- *More new programs designed by people who haven't served in a pastorate anytime recently. The reality gap is huge!*
- That my heart will become as hard as the tough skin I am developing out of necessity. Well-intentioned members can be cruel.
- *That finances will destroy my effectiveness. My theological confidence is firm. I have no fear that Christ will bring the church through. My congregation is prospering phenomenally. It seems the only people not prospering are my family, with all the financial challenges we face. Will the day ever come when one salary will support the pastoral family?*
- That there is no one in the congrega-

tion for the pastor to lean on for support, understanding, healing.

- *I fear that the new members I bring into the church will be criticized rather than encouraged and watched rather than disciplined.*
- That we will hardly get roots down before being asked to move. We are almost afraid to make friends because we will have to leave them.
- *I fear discovery that I'm not the super "out of this world" pastor my members want. I want to experience success as a soul winner, but my batting average is not what I dream it should be.*
- That some lack or inattention on my part will discourage someone in their Christian walk.
- *Fear of the world and its ways overtaking the church. How can we best hold high standards and still meet people's needs in a loving, winning way. This is my challenge.*
- Lack of respect for all the duties a pastor performs. That people will really believe the joke that pastors work only one day per week.
- *That the next workers' meeting will be as boring as the last one. How I wish for deep biblical themes.*
- That honest and formal evaluation with tangible recognition for outstanding performance will not come about and pastoral mediocrity will thus be encouraged.
- *If so little impact came during a year of emphasis on caring for pastors, imagine what it will revert to next year.*
- That stresses on our families will increase dramatically. The pastor's family receives lip service, but only workaholic attitudes and time commitments seem to be recognized and rewarded.
- *That I will live and model a life of*

*imbalance and that any of my family members—spouse or kids—will get turned off to God because Dad is involved in church work.*

- That everyone thinks my wife is free for babysitting, errand running, and singing—and then still wonders why she has to work full time.
- *Negative, critical people with an agenda. Whether "liberal, conservative, historic or traditional," they all have one common trait—judging everything a pastor says or does from the perspective of their own agenda. They are the only ones right and they know it!*
- Misappropriating my priorities and forgetting why I entered the ministry in the first place.
- *The upward mobility path still takes too many out of pastoring and conferences still look beyond their own pastoral team when prime churches need to be filled.*
- Being caught in conflicting expectations between what the conference wants and what local leaders demand. It is difficult to lead. Funds for creative innovation are often lacking. Pastors are set-up for failure when high-performance is demanded and resources in the congregation are insufficient.
- *That I am not the spiritual leader my church needs. I want to be more than a good technician. I want to be a man of God.*
- Being bogged down with programs so that there is little time to dig into the Word.
- *The fear of the pastor is many-sided. My best help comes on my knees as I commit my life to Jesus and relinquish to God what I cannot achieve. This is my fear-remover!*
- That Jesus won't come in 1994. ■

### Workers' kids' retreat

Children and youth of workers' families in the Rocky Mountain Conference obviously enjoyed the New Year's Eve party at a retreat designed especially for

them. Beyond having fun, participants discussed troubling questions such as "Why is God asking us to move again?" Because up to half of all Adventist workers' children in North America abandon Christ and the church, the Rocky Mountain Conference has determined to meet their



spiritual, social, and emotional needs. After all, what shall it profit pastors if they win the whole world to Christ but lose the souls of their own children?

### Hindu evangelism

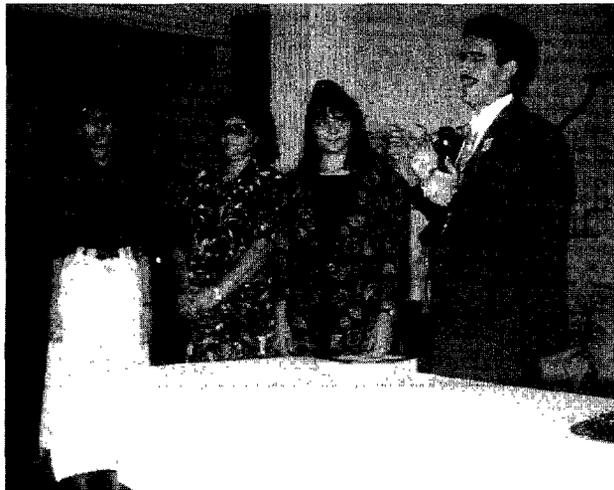


Baptismal candidates take their stand in the South Tamil Section of India. The campaign that led them to Christ culminated an eight-step pilot project designed and field-tested by the Centre for the Study of Hinduism. Workers first took door-to-door surveys to assess the needs of a particular village, then conducted stop-smoking and other community programs before holding gospel

reaping meetings with more than 90 baptisms to date.

### Hispanic church of young adults

Pastor Roger Hernandez of the Central church in Washington, D.C., introduces three new members to his congregation, recently spawned from the Capital Spanish church. More than 85 percent of Central church members are under the age of 35, and all seven church elders are under 40. Membership has nearly doubled in seven months. District senior pastor Pablo Perla reports a baptismal goal of 300 this year for the mother and daughter congregations.



### Health conference

A special conference dealing with the biblical, theological, and medical concepts of health convened at Adventist world headquarters June 18-24, 1993. Hosted by Dr. Albert Whiting, director of the General Conference Health/Temperance Department, the purpose of the conference was to study the theology, philosophy, and practice of health healing.

Participants included theologians, physicians, medical institution directors, hospital chaplains, departmental directors, and other guests. Twenty-seven study papers were presented on a wide range of topics. A complete list of all topics is available through the Health/Temperance Department of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904. ■

### Holy oil and fiery swords

*From page 17*

drains the holy oil of compassion right out of them? Are Seventh-day Adventist pastors kept from having swords because we are afraid of what they might do with them? Are we afraid the battle will get out of our control if we allowed the field officers the privilege of command? Who knows where they will strike? Maybe the greatest enemy is ourselves. We don't want to train warriors for fear they may someday attack us.

I entered the ministry thinking I would never need to fight. But I know now that if I don't fight, Satan and his hosts will destroy all I care about. The sword I shunned is still awaiting its champion. If I pick it up, what will become of the cruse of oil I have been carrying these many years?

Holy oil and fiery swords—can we afford them? Can we afford to be without them? ■

## Demons of righteousness

From page 5

Calvary for refuge from the demons of righteousness. He's back in church, eager as ever to keep God's commandments, but now his hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness.

His wife told me how terrible it had been to live with a man that attained "perfection." She discerned that his spiritual power was inspired by an alien force. Though amazingly victorious over the usual besetments, he had ceased being a loving husband.

"By their fruits you shall know them," Jesus said. And the fruit of the Spirit primarily is "love, joy, peace" (Gal. 5:22). God's true Spirit always works through the joy and peace that come from believing in Jesus (see Rom. 15:13). We might pray all night for the Holy Spirit, but without faith in the blood of Jesus our earnest incantations are in vain. Another spirit may possess us.

Let us beware and be wise. Amid the worldliness around us, God offers His church victory over sin—but so does the devil. May we resist his temptation to jump from the frying pan with the demons of iniquity into the fire with the demons of righteousness. ■

\* Bible texts in this article are from the New King James Version.

<sup>1</sup> "Magic," *Encyclopedia Americana* (1991), vol. 18, p. 84.

## Wages versus gift

From page 4

could only be by divine initiative and on divine terms. That initiative was God sending His Son to die on the cross, and those terms are receiving by faith the gift of "eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 6:23, KJV). Hence "the cross of Christ is our only hope."<sup>4</sup>

### The core of the gospel

Arnold Toynbee once said that all history is an exposition of the passage that "the wages of sin is death." Paul

would agree with that, but adds a profound exception: in human history there appeared an invasion of God in the person of Jesus to deal with the problem of sin and provide a divine solution to it. That exception to Toynbee's definition of history is at the basis of Paul's ungrammatical and illogical conclusion in Romans 6:23: "But the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

What Paul is saying is this. Until a sinner comes to Jesus, he or she remains subject to the inevitability of death and the impossibility of escape from death. But Jesus offers the free gift of eternal life. In contrast to the wages of sin, eternal life is not what one can earn or achieve or work for or even merit. The first condition of the path to eternal life is for self to strip itself of its pride to deny sin or of its pretension to solve the sin problem. Nietzsche was right in a way when he vented his venom: "Christianity needs sickness. . . . Making sick is the true hidden objective of the church's whole system of salvation procedures. . . . One is not 'converted' to Christianity—one must be sufficiently sick for it."<sup>5</sup>

The anti-God philosopher perhaps did not grasp the truth of what he said, but it is true nevertheless: As a sinner I am not only sick, but I must recognize my incurable and terminal sickness, and be driven to the cross of Jesus. There I must stand alone, facing the Crucified

One, and see in Him my substitute. I must acknowledge that He died for my sins (see Rom. 5:8; 14:15; 1 Cor. 15:3; 2 Cor. 5:14). His body was broken for me (see Luke 22:19; 1 Cor. 11:24). His blood was shed for me (see Luke 22:20; 1 Cor. 11:25). He died as though I were the only sinner on this earth. When I accept Him, His death cancels my death. His life becomes mine. I receive "the free gift of God [which] is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." As the old hymn says:

*Nothing in my hand I bring,  
Simply to Your cross I cling;  
Naked, come to You for dress;  
Helpless, look to You for grace;  
Foul, I to the fountain fly;  
Wash me, Saviour, or I die.*<sup>6</sup> ■

\* Unless otherwise noted, Scripture passages are from the Revised Standard Version.

<sup>1</sup> John Murray, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1959), vol. 1, p. 238.

<sup>2</sup> S. Radhakrishnan, *An Idealist View of Life* (Bombay: George Allen and Unwin, 1932, 1976), p. 96.

<sup>3</sup> In Halford E. Luccock, *Preaching Values in the Epistles of Paul* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1959), vol. 1, p. 45.

<sup>4</sup> Ellen G. White, *Testimonies* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1948), vol. 4, p. 503.

<sup>5</sup> Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Anti-Christ* (New York: Penguin, 1969), pp. 167, 168.

<sup>6</sup> Augustus Toplady, "Rock of Ages."

## Soul winning/health evangelism seminar

A soul winning and health evangelism seminar for doctors and ministers will be held December 5 through December 11, 1993, at the Adventist Media Center in Newbury Park, California. There will be no charge.

In the evening a community-wide Five-Day Plan to Stop Smoking will help prepare teams to go to China or Russia. Enrollment first come, first served.—Call (909) 824-4563 or FAX (909) 824-4845.

## Evangelism councils

Immediately following the above seminar, the Adventist Media Center will host the 1993 evangelism council for the western NAD. Dates are December 12 to 15. Seminar speakers are Mark and Ernestine Finley, Lenard Jaacks, Tim Lewis, John W. Fowler, and Leo Schreven. Call (805) 373-7612. For information on the eastern NAD evangelism council in Daytona Beach, call Ron Halverson at (404) 299-1832.

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## The Coming Revolution in Youth Ministry

Mark Senter, *Victor Books, Wheaton, Illinois, 1992, 216 pages, \$12.99, paper.* Reviewed by Steve Case, pastor and president of *Piece of the Pie Ministries for youth, Sacramento, California.*

"There are always risks in taking initiatives, but there are greater risks now in waiting for sure things, especially since there are very few sure things in the current volatile climate," quotes Mark Senter in his preface. This version of Senter's doctoral dissertation gives a historical view of youth ministry since its inception in North America two centuries ago.

Senter capitalizes on the twofold meaning of *revolution* as a proper description of the current situation. A revolution indicates "a complete cycle," he says, just as the earth makes one revolution every 24 hours. Senter has analyzed youth ministry in 50-year cycles and believes we've entered the breaking point of a new cycle. The second meaning for revolution refers to "a sudden, radical, or complete change." Senter believes the second meaning also applies to youth ministry today.

This work is a milestone in historical research into youth ministry. A look back makes a compelling argument for accurately predicting the future. Developments in interdenominational youth ministry and parachurch ministries over the past two decades fit perfectly into the cycle that has come to a close.

Early indications of the new cycle suggest that North American youth ministry will experience non-Anglo leadership, a greater international perspective, increasing urban focus, evangelization of groups rather than individuals, an emphasis on prayer and worship for youth, women in key leadership roles, youth ministry professionals training volunteers for service, consumer-oriented youth ministry from churches that intend to be viable, and resistance from the church, whether it be pastors, administrators, parents, or producers of resources.

Since the Adventist Church has increased its contact with the rest of society, one wonders about the degree to which the coming revolution will impact us. Some acknowledge that it has happened already. Previously existing

structures and organizations will continue in the new revolution. While new models will take the lead in reaching young people, the existing entities will have a very narrow range of groups they reach effectively. We face the danger of interpreting this narrow effectiveness as purity rather than obsolescence. We would do well to brainstorm new models that would assist in forming the head rather than the tail of youth ministry for the coming cycle. Toward the end of the book Senter provides seminal ideas for such an approach.

Let the Calebs and Joshuas take the day rather than those who maintain their identity in an outdated status quo!

## A Ready Defense: The Best of Josh McDowell

Compiled by Bill Wilson, *Here's Life Publishers, San Bernardino, California (now available through Thomas Nelson Publishers, Nashville), 1990, 495 pages, \$14.99, paper.* Reviewed by Mel H. M. Matinyi, a former evangelist, and a theology student at Solusi College, Zimbabwe, Africa, when he wrote this review.

Books that defend the validity of the Christian faith may be common, but not so easily read as this volume. Josh McDowell is one of the most prolific evangelical writers speaking to young adults today. Bill Wilson has taken passages from McDowell's writings that refer to apologetics and arranged them topically for easy reference.

The book opens with eight pages of personal testimony, then proceeds into its five sections: (1) the reliability of the Bible, (2) Jesus, His humanity and deity, (3) Christianity compared with other religions, (4) the most-asked questions about Christianity, and (5) the unique Christian experience.

Wilson subdivides each section into three or four parts. For example, in the section on Christianity and other religions we find non-Christian religions, secular religions, cults, and the occult. With 45 chapters, the book makes an excellent resource for pastors, Bible workers, and laypersons. Wilson documents his data, giving further references to compensate for brevity. He lists additional sources at the end of each chapter as well as in the appendix.

I highly recommend Wilson's work as an important book for anyone inter-

ested in the evidences for Christianity and its historical reference.

## Recently Noted

Pastors [Off the Record]: Straight Talk About Life in the Ministry, *Stefan Ulstein, InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, Ill., 1993, 252 pages, \$10.99, paper.*

After hearing too many times that pastors' kids should be examples, one minister told his members, "If any one of you ever again comes to me with a criticism of my kids and says, 'After all they are the pastor's kids,' I'll nail you to the wall. I will not have my kids growing up to hate my job or my God."

What do pastors say when they feel free to speak their minds? Stefan Ulstein interviews pastors from Canada, the United States, and Mexico. They span many denominations and come from megachurches and rural minichurches; from small towns and inner cities.

The idea for this book came to Ulstein as he noticed that many pastors seemed distant and hesitant to share their feelings. Now in this book they tell why—anonously. Ulstein wrote the book not only to encourage pastors, but to help congregations know how to treat these very human shepherds of the flock.

A Democratic Catholic Church: The Reconstruction of Roman Catholicism, *Eugene C. Bianchi and Rosemary Radford Ruether, eds., Crossroad Publishing Co., New York, 1992, 260 pages, \$23.95, hardcover.*

This book gives us a glimpse of another Catholic church that Adventists seldom hear about—that of those who want their church to represent truly the "people of God." The contributors argue for a more democratic and participatory church. They maintain that the current structure derives, not from the mandate of Jesus Christ, but from the monarchies within which it existed in times past, and that it is long overdue for change. Thirteen scholars and theologians contribute, including Hans Kung.

Who Cares? Cultivating the Fine Art of Loving One Another, *Gayle G. Roper, Harold Shaw Publishers, Wheaton, Illinois, 1992, 98 pages, \$6.95, paper.*

In the form of Bible studies, the book

presents Christian principles of caring. An excellent study book for a midweek series, it has questions and activities at the end of each chapter that guide readers in applying what they have learned. This book can help members be there for others, understand church conflicts, and revive relationships.

**Who's Who in Theology: From the First Century to the Present**, *John Bowden*, Crossroad Publishing Company, New York, 1992, 152 pages, \$18.95, hardcover.

A comprehensive guide to Christian history from the New Testament to the present. Of special interest is the list of all the popes and an objective description of them and their claims. Though Bowden lists Mary Baker Eddy, Joseph Smith, and Jonathan Edwards, Ellen White is notably absent. Even William Miller who impacted nineteenth-century American religion about the Second Coming finds no room in this volume.

**Report on the Church: Catholicism After Vatican II**, *Richard P. McBrien*, HarperSanFrancisco, San Francisco, 1992, 263 pages, \$19.00, hardcover.

If you are looking for sensationalism about the Catholic Church, this is not your book. An honest and scholarly account of tensions and changes in the church, McBrien's work addresses almost every major issue, event, need, and dispute that has affected the church in the past three decades. This is a good resource book for those interested in facts about contemporary Catholicism.

**The Church as the Body of Christ in the Pauline Corpus: A Reexamination**, *Gosnell L.O.R. Yorke*, University Press of America, Lanham, Maryland, 1991, 156 pages, \$23.50, paper.

Yorke wrote this scholarly work while he was teaching at Atlantic Union College.

Scholars have tried to come to grips with a fundamental but unresolved issue—the nature of the relationship between Christ via His own body and the church as a body. Some assume *soma Christou* points to Christ's risen body. Yorke, currently chairman of the Theology Department at the University of Eastern Africa Baraton, Kenya, examines that premise and demonstrates that the expression is not a reference to Christ's personal body, but instead, with regard to the church, has the human body

as its metaphorical referent.

**Comprehensive Index to the Writings of Ellen G. White, volume 4, A-Z Supplement**, *Pacific Press Publishing Association*, Boise, Idaho, 1992, 1,035 pages, \$23.95, hardcover.

Prepared under the direction of the board of trustees of the Ellen G. White Estate, this volume includes both a scripture index and a topical index (A to Z) to Ellen G. White books published since the last index.

**ParentWise: How to Raise Good Adventist Kids**, *Len McMillan*, Review and Herald Publishing Association, Hagerstown, Maryland, 1993, 138 pages, \$8.95, paper.

The author, a family-life specialist, gives parents practical suggestions for raising happy, well-adjusted children. In the process, Len McMillan explodes some myths about traditional families. He shows how Adventist families compare with the rest of society, and how they can avoid child-raising mistakes. This well-written volume will be hard to put down.

#### **Christmas Plays**

*The following Christmas books, published by CSS Publishing Co., Lima, Ohio, can be ordered by calling 800-537-1030.*

**A Night in Shining Darkness: A Children's Christmas Play**, *Lynda Pujado*, 1993, 39 pages, \$4.95, paper.

**Miracle in the Bethlehem Inn: A Christmas Play**, *Mary Lu Warstler*, 42 pages, \$5.75, paper.

**What Shall We Do With This Baby? A Christmas Eve Worship Service**, *Jan Spence*, 21 pages, \$4.25, paper.

#### **1994 Daily Devotional Books**

*All of these 1994 devotional books are published by Review and Herald Publishing Assn., Hagerstown, Maryland, and are available at your local Adventist Book Center.*

**Sure as the Dawn**, *Donald Ernest Mansell and Vesta West Mansell*, 1993, 400 pages, US\$9.95, Cdn\$13.45, hardcover.

The Mansells have provided a daily meditation book for adults filled with inspiring stories from which they have drawn lessons of God's care and power in the Christian life. For example, in "Blessings in Disguise," we read how, at age 40, Wallace Johnson was fired from his job at a sawmill. This "setback" gave Johnson the opportunity to start Holiday Inns and not only become wealthy himself but help thousands of others.

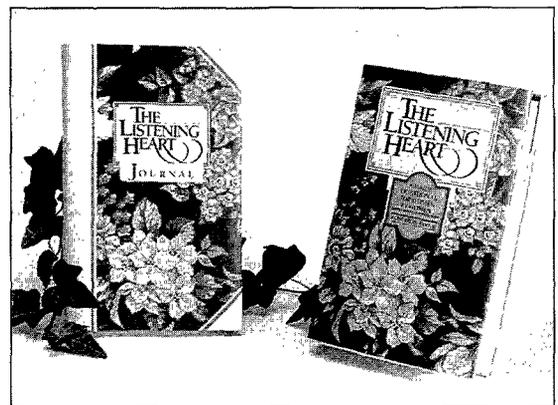
**Growing Up With Jesus: Devotions for Preschoolers**, 223 pages, US\$9.95, Cdn\$13.45, hardcover.

Eighteen authors have come together to contribute delightful character-building stories and worship activities for preschool children. Topics include missions, animals, nature, obedience, and faithfulness.

**Way to Go!**, *Corrine Vanderwerff*, 1993, 384 pages, US\$9.95, Cdn\$13.45, hardcover.

Corrine Vanderwerff, writer, missionary, and manager of the REACH child sponsorship programs in Zaire, brings juniors a daily devotional book filled with exciting stories that will help them build a relationship with God.

**The Listening Heart**, *Rose Otis, ed.*, 1993, 429 pages, US\$12.95, Cdn\$17.50, hardcover.

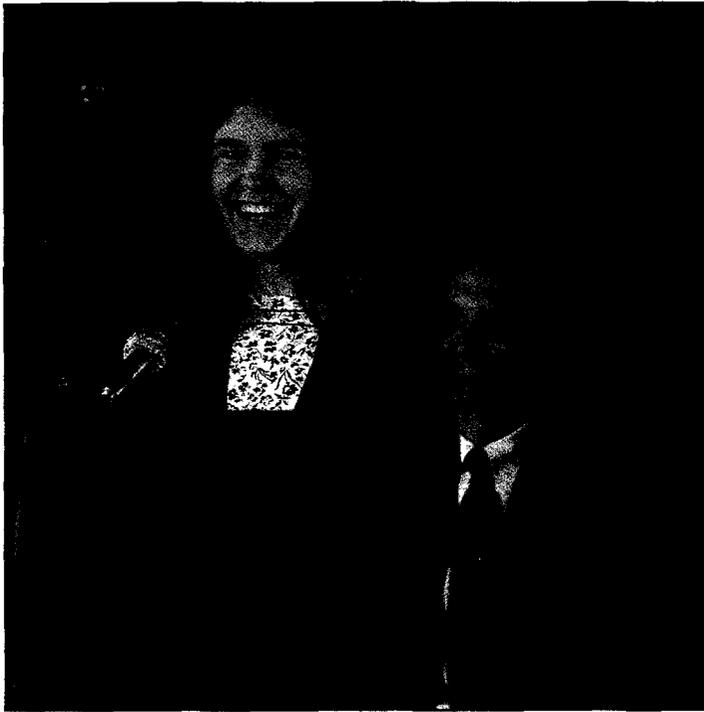


More than 200 women write from their hearts in this 1994 daily devotional for women. A journal accompanies the volume in which women can record their own spiritual growth as they journey through the year with *The Listening Heart*. Royalties go to a General Conference women's ministry scholarship fund to assist women around the world in gaining skills to further the mission of the church.

# You Can't Teach an

# Old Dog Tricks

New



Annie Kjaer  
from the first training program sharing  
her experiences with the second group

—BUT—

You *can* teach lay  
persons to do  
public evangelism!

Learn what other  
lay persons and pastors  
have learned!

"As a pastor I was given some needed materials to help me train my lay people. Also, I received information to help me to conduct my first evangelistic series some time soon. The whole week was a tremendous blessing to me. I would recommend this seminar to lay people and to young pastors."

—Pastor Dave Jamieson



Carol Torres, instructor  
presenting important  
material on music

Plan to attend the next Lay Evangelist Training seminar held at Hagerstown, Maryland January 16-23, 1994.



Dr. Tim Rittenour, M.D.  
delivering his practice  
sermon

For further information, call Louis Torres, program director of the Amazing Facts Lay Evangelist Training, at (301) 694-6200 or write to PO Box 680, Frederick, MD 21705-0680.